

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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# Concordia Theological Monthly

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*Address all communications to the Editorial Committee in care of  
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# Concordia Theological Monthly

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## Martin Samuel Sommer, 1869—1949

**D**R. M. S. SOMMER was a gentleman of the first water. One could meet him at leisure or at work and find him always the same — kindly, wholehearted, congenial, and cheerful; ready and willing to enliven the conversation with a good quotation from classical literature, whether English, German, or Latin; or eager to tell a good story to illustrate a point he was trying to make.

He was a good friend, loyal and reliable, not easily ruffled by outward circumstances. If conditions of life were not too favorable, he never complained.

He was a good husband. During our long years of friendship I learned to know his second wife, the widow of the sainted Dr. G. Stoeckhardt, who for a series of years was disabled by accidents, which meant that he as husband had to take care of many things usually done by the woman in the home. It meant visits to the hospital, shopping for groceries, attending to many details of house-keeping — even though they had a cook and at times a nurse in the home. Not once did I see a look or hear a word of impatience.

He was a good father. He had two sons, one a literary man, one a preacher. The relations between them were excellent. It was my privilege to meet with the sons after the funeral, and I was deeply impressed by the high regard in which they held him.

He was a good preacher. His entire ministry of twenty-nine years was spent in Grace Church, St. Louis. That was pioneer work in many ways, yet after twenty years at Grace he was able to build a church which for seating space and for Sunday School rooms was one of our largest church buildings in St. Louis.

He was a good scholar and professor. The twenty-nine years of his professorship at Concordia Seminary were spent mostly in teaching young men how to preach. Our ministers in the Church are generally regarded as able preachers of the Word. About half of

our present ministry learned sermon making and sermon preaching from him.

He was a good writer and editor. Most of his writing was done for the *Lutheran Witness*. He could write clearly and potently. He knew how to write for the common man. After his retirement as one of the *Witness* editors last fall, many people expressed their deep regrets, for they value his writings highly. The books from his pen are: *Prayers*. Submitted by Prof. Martin S. Sommer (17 editions), Rudolf Volkening, St. Louis, Mo.; *The Voice of History*, Concordia Publishing House (1913); *Physical Training of Public Speakers*, Concordia Publishing House (1924); *Something Better Than Advice—Power!* (1928); *The Truth Which Makes Us Free* (1932); Editor of *Concordia Pulpit*, Concordia Publishing House, 1930—35. He was able to complete the manuscript of the translation of Dr. Stoeckhardt's *Commentary on Ephesians*.

Dr. Sommer made the following contributions to our journal:

"Tertulliani *Apologeticum*," Vol. IV, p. 811; "The Argument of St. Augustine's *Confessions*," Vol. V, p. 185; "The Pastor and Secular Literature," Vol. VII, p. 677; "That Review of Pastor Goers' Book in the *Lutheran*," Vol. IX, p. 674; "The Province of Human Reason in Religion," Vol. X, p. 420; "The Articulus Catholicus," Vol. XI, p. 81.

Friend, husband, father, preacher, professor, writer, and editor—in all things conscientious and evangelical! His passing came quickly, unexpectedly. We remember him. We miss him.

In farewell we say: "Till we meet again!"

W. G. POLACK

## Walter Arthur Maier, 1893-1950

ON January 11, 1950, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, like all other sections of our Church, was thrown into a state of deepest mourning by the news that one of its professors, Dr. Walter A. Maier, shortly after midnight had departed this life. While since 1944 he had been on leave of absence, devoting his energies almost exclusively to the work of the Lutheran Hour, he was living on the campus, had contact with other professors and with students, and sent out his Sunday broadcasts from Station KFUO, located on the campus of Concordia Seminary. It was known that on December 29 he had been stricken with a serious heart ailment, but quite generally the hope was entertained that owing to his apparently inexhaustible resources of physical strength and endurance he would soon recover; but the Lord willed otherwise.

It cannot be the purpose of these brief observations to describe in detail Dr. Maier's activities. A few general remarks will have to suffice. The departed colleague was an extremely versatile man. He was widely read, possessed a retentive memory, and could use his gifts and learning with equal facility inside and outside the classroom. Perhaps he will be chiefly remembered for his ability as a public speaker. It may be difficult to define eloquence, but he certainly possessed it. Enormous audiences hung spellbound on his lips. He had a rich, varied vocabulary at his disposal, and the matchless felicity of expression which graced his utterances was the delight of learned and unlearned hearers alike. This endowment, connected with the gift of forceful, dramatic presentation, made him one of the foremost orators of our day.

In this note we wish to speak especially of his theology. Whoever heard him, soon noticed that Dr. Maier was a Biblical theologian. It was his constant aim to preach the great truths of the Scriptures, Law and Gospel, sin and grace, Christ and His redemption. The modern speculations in the field of doctrine had little interest for him. There was no attempt made by him to gain a hearing by advocating doctrinal compromises. With absolute fearlessness and definite clarity he uttered his convictions. Throughout the English-speaking world he was considered one of the chief

spokesmen of conservative Christianity. It was self-evident to him that he should strive to adhere to the Lutheran Confessions, to which he had pledged loyalty when he accepted the call to the professorship. In his view these Confessions correctly set forth Scripture teaching. The Bible was to him the inerrant Word of God. The many attacks of critics on the authority and reliability of the Old Testament, while he took cognizance of them, did not shake his faith in the least. As an exegete he ranked high. His conference papers, for instance, on Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, and the Prophet Amos, showed that he knew how to bring to the surface the pure gold of divine truth contained in the passages of Holy Scripture. In his classroom work as teacher of the Old Testament he took pains to do justice to the philological questions involved when he interpreted a text. His notes on Genesis, the Psalms, and Isaiah, the books on which he chiefly lectured, are extensive and thorough. It is hoped that his commentary on the Prophet Nahum, which was almost ready for print, can be issued before long.

In Dr. Maier one saw exemplified in a remarkable degree conformity to the old Lutheran principle that theology should be a *habitus practicus theosdotos*. Theology was to him not simply a science among sciences, a subject for investigation to bring to light interesting and probably useful facts, but it was to him an intensely practical and indispensable activity to acquaint men with the way of salvation, which is through faith in Christ Jesus, our Lord. In keeping with this attitude, he led a life of humble prayer, and to be present at his family devotions was a true benediction.

In addition to other relatives, his death is mourned by his widow, the former Miss Hulda Eickhoff, and his two sons, Walter, Jr., pastor in Elma, N. Y., and Paul, a student at Harvard. His memory will be cherished by millions of people all over the world.

*Requiescat in pace, et lux aeterna luceat ei!*

WM. ARNDT

# Luther's Concept of the Atonement Before 1517

By LEWIS W. SPITZ

Recent years have seen a delightfully refreshing interest in Luther's writings. One might almost speak of a Luther renaissance. Luther scholarship in Sweden immediately comes to one's mind. But other countries as well have made their contributions, and other religious groups besides the Lutheran. We may think of such men as Werner Elert and Erich Seeberg in Germany, Philip S. Watson in England, and Roland H. Bainton in America. This number could easily be multiplied. Among the subjects which have engaged the attention of these scholars in Luther's writings is his concept of the Atonement — a most important subject indeed! For as the doctrine of justification by faith is the very heart of Luther's theology, so the doctrine of the atonement is the very center of the doctrine of justification by faith. Luther's theology is not only theocentric but Christocentric; it is the theology of Christ Crucified, of the Cross. In this all Luther scholars are agreed. They are not all agreed, however, when they attempt to label Luther's doctrine of the atonement.

As it is easier to trace the mighty Amazon nearer its source than where it pours its flood into the ocean, so some believe it is easier to trace Luther's thinking in his earlier years than in those of his full development as a theologian and writer. Hence a great deal of attention is given to "the young" Luther. This seems to be Karl Holl's approach.<sup>1</sup> The present study is an attempt to present a number of Luther's expressions regarding Christ's work of redemption without any effort at co-ordinating them into any particular theory.

Whatever one may call Luther's doctrine of the atonement, it is obvious that his concept of it in relation to the doctrine of justification by faith has given his entire theology a unity, coherence, and balanced emphasis which has never been excelled by any other theologian, no matter how eminent he may have been in the field of systematic theology. As soon as Luther put his trust in the doctrine of justification by faith, his entire theology began to arrange

itself in an orderly pattern around it like iron filings along the lines of force in a magnetic field. Some time passed before Luther could detect all the non-magnetic materials, which would not respond to the magnet, and could eliminate them. That is, for some time traces of the old, now discredited, theology of erroneous medieval accretions can still be detected in his writings.

Theodosius Harnack directs attention to this fact. He shows how Luther by placing Christ in the very center of his theology created a different theological structure from that of the Middle Ages, though he did not lay aside all erroneous terms of the old at once. He says: "Not from above downward, but from below upward; not starting with the idea of the deity, its counsels, its immanent solitary activity in the creature, but starting with God in Christ, in the Word, etc.—that is for him the way which the knowledge peculiar to faith follows, and which according to his opinion alone deserves the name theology. That is Luther's original maxim, to which he also remained true at all times. To pursue a different way is for him 'speculating above the clouds and wanting to catch them.' In this way he also acquired for, and restored to, the Church a theology which, no matter how modest it may appear to one viewing it superficially, in contrast with the proud intellectual cathedrals of scholasticism, nevertheless, by far excells these in truth and inwardness, in solidity and depth, and also in magnificence, because it rests upon the strong and solid foundation which God Himself has laid and makes the heart cheerful and certain, and because its only purpose is to meditate on the thoughts of grace which God in the chief of all His works has laid down and made manifest."<sup>2</sup>

Harnack shows that even though Luther was not at once able to eliminate theoretically all the foreign elements and to assimilate and unite the related ones organically, this justifying faith, which already stands more firmly for him than heaven and earth, nevertheless gives to his theology the correct sense of the true and the false, for that which is salutary and that which is harmful to the soul, and endows it with a principle and gives it a character, by virtue of which it differs manifestly also from that of St. Augustine and of the mystics. As early as 1516, says Harnack, the words are true of Luther's theology which he later wrote in the foreword to his commentary on Galatians, where he confesses: "In my heart

this article rules alone, and shall rule alone, namely, faith in my dear Lord Christ, who is the only middle, beginning, and end of all my spiritual and godly thoughts, which I may ever have day and night.”<sup>3</sup>

The centrality of the Cross in Luther's theology, already in these early years, is clearly demonstrated by his approach to the Bible. As the Cross of Christ is the pivot on which his entire theology turns, so it is the hub around which his understanding of the Bible revolves. In a fragment of a sermon delivered on November 11, 1515, Luther warns against a misuse of the Bible and tells the reader how to use it rightly. He advises: “Whosoever will read the Bible must indeed pay heed that he does not err, for the Scripture indeed permits itself to be stretched and manipulated (*leiten*), but let none manipulate it according to his own feeling, but let him lead it to the fountain, that is, to the Cross of Christ, so he will surely hit the mark and will not miss. *Unum praedica, sapientiam crucis*, that is, that it is not in man's power, nor is he able, and so he learns to despair of himself and to hope in Christ.”<sup>4</sup> On the basis of such advice Luther could safely risk putting the Bible in the hands of the laity. The reader gets lost on his journey through the Bible only if he takes his eyes off the goal—the Cross of Christ.

We return to the importance of the Cross in the doctrine of justification by faith. Luther did not exaggerate its importance. It cannot be exaggerated. The doctrine of justification by faith stands or falls with the true doctrine of the Cross. Dogmatically speaking, we may say that the doctrine of subjective justification stands or falls with that of objective justification. Unless Christ by His active and passive obedience—we have learned to speak in these terms—has redeemed the world, there is no forgiveness which may be acquired by faith in the Redeemer. This, then, underscores the importance of the doctrine regarding Christ's redemptive work and raises the question of His vicarious atonement—a question which engages particularly also present-day Luther students.

According to Carlson, Aulen finds in Luther's writings the dramatic character of the Atonement.<sup>5</sup> “It cannot well be denied,” he holds, “that the idea of conflict and victory appears in Luther's treatment of the atonement. The Swedish students have amassed an impressive body of supporting evidence.”<sup>6</sup> Carlson questions,

however, whether this is the only view of the Atonement that can be derived from Luther, and he shows that it is indeed not the only one that has been attributed to him. He ascribes to the period of Orthodoxy adherence to the satisfaction theory and declares that large numbers of students of Luther since that time must at least have found passages to support this theory.<sup>7</sup> Referring to Hjalmar Lindroth's *Foersoningen*, he mentions three types of passages dealing with the Atonement. In the first, he says, the satisfaction idea appears alone, in the second the dramatic motif comes out very clearly, and in the third the two are interwoven.<sup>8</sup> The reader will be alert to the possible presence of these types in the passages which will be cited from the early writings of Luther.

Watson seems to favor Aulen's theory and suggests its close resemblance to patristic conceptions. He regards Dr. Sidney Cave's criticism of Aulen's thesis as one-sided. According to Cave, says Watson, Luther taught not only the patristic view, but also the penal theory of the Atonement, or at least gave interpretations of Christ's work of which the penal theory is a rationalization.<sup>9</sup> Theodosius Harnack, he adds, might seem to lend support to this view when he maintains that Luther's chief emphasis is not chiefly on Christ's conflict with the powers of evil, but on His relation to the Law; therefore not on redemption, but on atonement.<sup>10</sup>

Watson sees the difficulty in trying to force Luther into a specific theory. He reminds the reader that Luther quite frequently uses imagery very different from that of conflict and victory to express the significance of the work of Christ. Luther, he says, "speaks of Christ's satisfaction of the Law, His merit, His sacrifice, His pacification of the wrath of God." But Watson suggests the question whether there may not be a consistent purpose underlying all Luther's statements about the work of Christ, however diverse they may be superficially.<sup>11</sup> The Luther student will find this to be true even of the young Luther. Luther's theology is indeed so rich in expression that it is difficult to force its terminology into any particular pattern. *Christus Victor?* Surely there are in Luther's writings abundant passages which describe Christ's conflict with His and our spiritual enemies. Luther's disciples today use the same language, particularly at Easter time. Luther also frequently speaks of the satisfaction Christ rendered for us. He speaks of Christ's

fulfillment of the Law and His bearing the wrath of God. He knows that Christ has redeemed us from the guilt and the power of sin. But his portraits of Christ as the Savior are only so many facets of the same diamond. Luther may see in Christ our Champion who slew our enemies, as David slew Goliath, or he may regard Him as the benevolent Master who pays the debts of His servants and so frees them from slavery.

Watson holds that if Dr. Cave's allegation that Luther teaches what is virtually a penal theory of the atonement could be substantiated, it would reveal a profound and irreconcilable contradiction in Luther's thought. He maintains, with Dr. Cave, that the penal theory implies the primacy of divine justice, which requires that the claim of God's Law and wrath should be satisfied before His love can do its work.<sup>12</sup> Here, however, we must again be reminded of the fact that Luther places the Cross in the center of his theology. God's love goes out to man only through Christ. Apart from Christ, God is not Love, but Wrath toward the sinner. The God of love and justice is one and the same God. Viewed in Christ, He is Love; viewed apart from Christ, He is Wrath in His attitude toward the world. Luther's pronouncements regarding salvation must be blended as so many strokes of the artist's brush to present the finished picture of his thinking.

The doctrine of the vicarious atonement presupposes the necessary qualifications on the part of the Atoner for the task He was to perform. According to the Scripture, there is only one who could thus qualify, namely: Jesus Christ, true God and true Man in one person — the God-Man. Only He could act as man's substitute; only His work would be satisfactory to God. The Redeemer, or Atoner, as Luther portrays Him, meets this qualification. There is never any doubt in Luther's portrayal regarding either Christ's true humanity or deity. Luther never challenges Christ's sufficiency for the task He was to perform. His earliest expositions of Scripture known to us — on the Psalms and on Romans — know only Christ, God incarnate, as the Savior. "It is mainly as the One who has borne our sins," says Koestlin, "that He [Christ] is presented to our view. We may refer, for illustration, to His weeping, which nothing but our sins occasioned, and especially to His last suffering and death. It is here that the consciousness of the primitive divine

wrath directed against sin asserts itself in its full strength. In many instances, scattered through the entire work [commentary on the Psalms], we find already a complete expression of that very deep view of the sufferings of Christ as due to the wrath of God which remained a distinct characteristic of Luther's teaching. It was punishment which He there endured. He saw the wrath of God and therefore wept and prayed for us. In order to suffer thus, He took upon Himself infirmity from the sole of His foot to the crown of His head. Confessions of sin uttered by the Psalmists are to be regarded as spoken directly by Him. He, made to be sin and a curse for us, confessed our own sins before God. The death which He suffered was that appointed for Adam: He reaped what Adam sowed. He even tasted hell, but did not exhaust its misery. The ungodly must drink the dregs, and can never fully drain the cup. Believers now, on the other hand, shall never taste of it."<sup>13</sup>

It is to be expected that Luther's presentation of doctrine is not always as clear in the early years of his writing as it became later. As late as the year 1516, says Harnack, Luther could still teach in a vacillating manner on the one hand "that we are righteous only of God, who justifies and imputes righteousness," and on the other hand that our righteousness does not consist in works, as Aristotle teaches, but "in faith, hope, and love."<sup>14</sup> For another illustration we may cite a sermon delivered on the tenth Sunday after Trinity, in 1516, in which Luther combines the merit of Christ with that of His saints, stating with respect to indulgences: "Quae [indulgentiae] profecto, etsi ipsum meritum Christi et sanctorum eius ideoque omni reverentia suscipiendae, tamen teterrimum factae sunt ministerium avaritiae. Quinam enim per eas salutem quaerunt animalium et non potius pecuniam bursarum!"<sup>15</sup> It was Luther's difficult task to make new bottles for the new wine he was pouring. Luther found it necessary to become a neologist. He had to give old terms a new meaning and had to create new terms to express old truths. In the process he sometimes failed to keep the old and the new sharply apart.

For any number of passages which might indicate a lack of clear thinking regarding salvation a dozen and more can be cited to show how fully Luther put his trust in the merits of Christ alone. For these we turn chiefly to his commentary on Romans of 1515—16.<sup>16</sup>

Commenting on Rom. 5:15: "But not as the offense, so also is the free gift," Luther says: "Therefore the meaning is: 'The grace of God' (through which He justifies us or, rather, which is present as having its source in Christ, as the sin of man has in Adam) 'and the gift,' namely, the one which Christ pours out from the Father upon them that believe in Him, this gift was communicated 'through the grace of this single Man,' that is, through the personal merit and the personal grace, for the sake of which it pleased God to give us this gift. That 'through the grace of this single Man' is to be understood of the personal grace of Christ, equivalent to one's own and the personal sin of Adam, but 'the gift' is nothing but the righteousness which has been given us."<sup>17</sup> Thus we receive the gift of divine righteousness only through the Man Christ. Only He can dispel the fear of the judgment on the Last Day. Commenting on Rom. 8:7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God," Luther says: "This fear accordingly no one has overcome save Christ alone, who has overcome death and all temporal evils and also eternal death. Who therefore believes in Him has in the future no longer any reason to fear."<sup>18</sup> Christ is our Righteousness; He has overcome our fear: therefore His is the glory. But Christ can be rightly honored only if we credit Him with all good things and accuse ourselves and attribute all evil things only to ourselves.<sup>19</sup> Here Luther again emphasizes Christ's humanity. In His humanity the divine Redeemer must be adored. To this, says Luther, the Prophet incites.<sup>20</sup>

To atone for our sins the divine-human Redeemer had to produce a righteousness superior to any the human race could produce. Commenting on Is. 65:1 (cf. Rom. 10:20), Luther explains: "This word . . . must be understood thus: Without our works and merits the righteousness of God is offered us—us who desire and long for things entirely different from God's righteousness. For who would have sought the Word which was made flesh if He had not revealed Himself? So He was found when not sought; but once found, He will ever be sought further and ever be found better. He permits Himself to be found if we turn from our sins to Him; but He is sought if we remain in conversion [*Umkehr*.]"<sup>21</sup>

To make it possible that He and His righteousness could thus be found, Christ had to do God's will in fullest measure. He had

to be obedient even unto death; for also in dying Christ fulfilled the will of God. Thus His passive obedience is not only a penalty for the guilt of sin, but an active fulfillment of the Law. He suffered and died because He loved God. Luther explains: "For Christ also was damned and forsaken more than all saints. And not, as some suggest, did He suffer only lightly, but really and truly He sacrificed Himself for us to God the Father into eternal damnation. Indeed, His human nature was not otherwise than a person who is to be eternally damned to hell. For this His love to God, God also immediately raised Him from death and hell, and so He devoured hell. Therein all His saints must become like Him; some more, some less. The more perfect they are in love, the more willing and easily they will be able to do it. But Christ performed this the hardest way, therefore He complains in so many passages of Scripture over the pains of hell."<sup>22</sup> Love is the motivating power in Christ's suffering, and love is the fulfillment of the Law.

Commenting on Paul's complaint: "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart" (Rom. 9:2), Luther takes occasion to characterize the nature of love. He says: "Love is not purely joy and sweetness, but great, deep sadness and bitterness. But, no, it is full of joy and sweetness in the midst of bitter sadness, because it regards the misery and wretchedness of others as its own. So also Christ glowed most fervently with love in His final and severest Passion. Indeed, according to the blessed Hilary, this was His greatest joy that He was suffering the greatest sorrow."<sup>23</sup>

The death of Christ proves His perfect love of the Father and His absolute obedience to the Father's will. So completely did Christ merge His will with that of the Father that, even in His extreme struggle with death, He submerged His not-willing beneath His willing. Luther puts it thus: "So also Christ in His fight with death perfected His not-willing (so to speak) by means of the most fervent willing. For so God deals with his saints that He has them do with the greatest strength of the will what they most decidedly do not will."<sup>24</sup> We are here reminded of Christ's prayer in Gethsemane: "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).

It is in obedience to His Father that Christ suffers and dies.

On Rom. 14:9: "For to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living," Luther makes the comment: "Not as though He had striven for this as for His own self, but He was obedient therein to the Father, who willed that He should thus die and rise again; otherwise He, too, would not have died and been resurrected unto God, but unto Himself."<sup>25</sup> It may be well to note here that no mention is made of the ancient idea of paying a ransom to the devil. Christ dies unto God, not unto the devil.

Seeberg contends that also in rendering satisfaction to God not the blood, but the righteousness of Christ is most prominent in Luther's earliest writings. He adds, however, that the death of Christ cannot be regarded as having significance for this Person alone. It is the "completest satisfaction" for our sins and therefore works the forgiveness of our sins. He refers to Luther's comment on Rom. 4:25: "Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification," regarding which Luther says: "The death of Christ is the death of sin and His resurrection is the life of righteousness. For through His death He rendered satisfaction for our sin and through His resurrection He imputed His righteousness to us. And so His death does not merely symbolize, but also works the forgiveness of sins as the most satisfying satisfaction. And His resurrection is not merely an earnest of our righteousness, but also works it in us, if we believe in it, and is its cause."<sup>26</sup> This righteousness is given us only through faith. "So it is resolved," says Luther, "so it pleases God, and therein nothing will be changed."<sup>27</sup> But "this is, indeed, extremely bitter for the wisdom of the flesh," says Luther, "which rebels against it and permits itself to be incited to blasphemy; for here it is completely killed and totally annihilated when it recognizes the fact that its salvation in no wise depends on itself and its activity, but is founded on that alone which is outside itself, namely, on God's predestination."<sup>28</sup> No glory to man; all glory to God!

Luther himself arrived at the conviction that man is justified by grace through faith only after years of spiritual anguish, labor, and struggle. Hence he does not tire to direct men away from themselves to Christ and His righteousness. Already in 1514 he said in a sermon: "Christ would be our hen for salvation (Matt. 23:37).

This is that with all our righteousness we cannot at all be saved; but we must flee beneath the wings of this our hen, so that we receive from His fullness what is not to be found in us. Mal. 4:2; Ps. 91:4; 63:7. For whosoever saunters along securely in his own righteousness, him the birds of prey, that is, the most cruel devils, will wrest away.”<sup>29</sup>

In his “Sermo in Festo Bartholomaei Apostoli,” Aug. 24, 1516, he says: “Jews are those who seek to be justified by their own works: therefore they do not want to hear that Christ is their Righteousness and are offended in Him, saying, ‘Let us do evil,’ etc. But let them; they are blind.”<sup>30</sup> In his “Dictata super Psalterium, Glossa: Psalmus XXIX (XXX),” Luther, quoting Rom. 4:25, speaks of the Lord’s holiness with which He sanctifies you and says: “But in the death of Christ we are baptized and made holy.”<sup>31</sup> In his “Scholae: Psalmus XXXI (XXXII)” he declares: “No one is blessed unless his iniquities are remitted. Hence the corollary: No one is without iniquity, everyone is a son of wrath and therefore in need that it be forgiven him. But this is not done save through Christ.”<sup>32</sup> In his commentary on Romans he says: “For God would not save us through our own, but through a strange righteousness and wisdom, through a righteousness which does not come from within us and has its source in us, but which comes from elsewhere to us. Therefore a righteousness which comes altogether from without and is entirely foreign to us must be taught.”<sup>33</sup> This thought reoccurs like a refrain. Luther repeats: “Therefore it was correct when I said that all our good is outside ourselves — Christ! As the Apostle says (1 Cor. 1:30): ‘Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.’ All that is in us only through faith in Him and hope in Him.”<sup>34</sup>

The blood of Christ and propitiation occupy a prominent place in Luther’s thinking. There is no satisfaction without the blood of Christ, “whom God hath set forth . . . to be a Mercy-Seat (*propitatorium*) through faith in His blood. . . . In His blood: He wanted to become the Mercy-Seat for us only in this manner, that He first would render satisfaction for us through His blood. And so He became a Mercy-Seat for the believers in His blood.”<sup>35</sup> Luther emphasizes the importance of faith to the highest degree, as is obvious from the complete citation. He declares: “‘Quem propositus deus’

(i. e., *ab aeterno ordinavit et nunc ita posuit 'propitiatorium per fidem'* i. e., ut sit propitiatio pro peccatis, sed non nisi creditibus), quia per incredibilitatem propitiatorium potius in tribunal et judicium mutatur, 'in sanguine ipsius,' quia *non voluit hoc propitiatorium nobis fieri, nisi per sanguinem prius pro nobis satisfaceret.* Ideo *in sanguine suo factus est propitiatorium creditibus.*" Glossa 34. 20.<sup>36</sup> Again: "God does not grant grace freely in the sense that He demanded no satisfaction, but He offered up Christ, that He should render satisfaction for us, in order now to give grace freely to those who had rendered satisfaction through another."<sup>37</sup> Could Luther have expressed the doctrine of the vicarious atonement more clearly? No one can be justified without Christ; "for by forgiving sins through the Mercy-Seat and so justifying, He reveals how necessary His righteousness is, since there is no one to whom He must not forgive."<sup>38</sup> "He bears them [sins], therefore, patiently to forgive them; He forgives them to show His righteousness or justification through faith in our mercy-seat in His blood."<sup>39</sup> Objective justification makes possible subjective justification. "Only the New Testament, that is, grace through faith in Christ, takes away sin," says Luther. "God, however, takes away sin when He gives faith, since sins are remitted to those who believe."<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, the remission of sins proves God's power to forgive sins.<sup>41</sup>

In this pattern of salvation the Law occupies a position of such importance as to merit special attention. As Adam's sin consists in the transgression of the Law, so the righteousness of the saints does not consist in fulfilling the Law, but only in the imputation of Christ's fulfillment of the Law, which He Himself accomplished.<sup>42</sup> Thus believers fulfill the Law through faith in Christ, whose righteousness and fulfillment of the Law is their own, given by God, who has pity on them, by grace.<sup>43</sup> In his sermon delivered on St. Stephen's Day, 1515, Luther declared: "So spoke the Apostle Romans 8. The wisdom of the flesh is death, for it is not subject to God, neither can it. Therefore, as we are carnal, it is impossible for us to fulfill the Law, but Christ alone came to fulfill it, which we could only break. . . . Nevertheless, Christ ascribed His fulfillment to us in that He exhibited Himself as a hen to us, that we might flee under His wings and through His fulfillment we

also might fulfill the Law. O sweet hen! O blessed chicks of this hen!"<sup>44</sup> God imposes the Law that grace should be sought and acknowledged and the wisdom of the flesh should be set aside, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin.<sup>45</sup>

"Every Law gives occasion to sin, unless grace and favor aid and the inclination (*affectus*) and will are directed towards the Law. . . . As the poet puts it: 'We always desire that which is forbidden and stretch the hands desirously after that which is denied.' 'So the sick desires the forbidden water.' 'What is permitted is not welcome; what is not allowed burns the hotter.' 'What pursues me that I flee, and what flees from me that I pursue.'"<sup>46</sup>

The Law is the strength and the power of sin, through which sin remains and rules. From this despotism of the Law and sin no one is freed save through Christ.<sup>47</sup> By the Law the old man is discovered. Commenting on Rom. 7:4: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ," Luther explains: "One does not recognize the old man before the Law has been recognized and set up (*positam*); but when it has been set up, the old man is, as it were, also born. So by the Law we are subject to the old man and sin, that is, we see that we are subject."<sup>48</sup> Commenting on the next verse (7:5): "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the Law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death," he adds: "Namely, through the Law of Moses, for that is the Law of the former man, that is, of the old man, which was not set up by him, but he was much rather through this Law resurrected unto life. For that reason it says, 'were by the Law,' for without Law there was no old man. 'Law of the man' so it says in the creative sense, because it first creates the man and subjects the soul to him, as also the law of marriage is not created by the husband, but creates the husband and subjects to the husband. In marriage it subjects palpably (*handgreiflich*), but here in a spiritual sense, in so far as it now leads to a knowledge and an increase of the lust to sin or rather to obedience (to it). For by the Law sin grows still more as long as grace is absent. . . . But when grace is granted, the old man dies and the Law can thereafter no longer create or manifest him. So we die unto the power and dominion of the Law, but not

to the Law *per se* and simply, that is, we are not under the Law, even when we have the Law.”<sup>49</sup> “But now are we delivered from the Law” (7:6). “Howso are we delivered ‘from the Law?’” Luther asks. He answers: “Manifestly by this, that we through faith in Christ render satisfaction to the Law and through faith are free and inclined to the works of the Law. He who does not possess this grace is unwilling or acts from fear of punishment or from lust of gain. Therefore we need the love which seeks that which is God’s and which is given to him who in faith and in Christ’s name prays for it. Even though we sin often and are not fully willing, we have, nevertheless, made a beginning and, marching forward, are righteous and free. Indeed we must always fear the fact that we are under the Law. Therefore we must always believe and pray for love. For who knows whether he is not doing from fear of punishment or love of his own advantage, whether he is not even in a real fine form in his prayers and pious works striving more for rest and pay than to do God’s will?”<sup>50</sup> In reference to the words: “that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter” (7:6), Luther takes occasion to remark that Paul here includes the whole Law, also the Moral Law. He says: “Lyra accordingly errs when he insists that Christ has abolished the Law in so far as it concerns judicial and ceremonial, but not in so far as it concerns moral precepts. Much rather he here says clearly also of the moral precepts that they are in the Law of death and of the letter.”<sup>51</sup>

Seeberg sums up Luther’s attitude toward the Law as follows: “But indeed the freeing from the Law is by him a freeing to the Law. It does not mean unrestraint and caprice, but love of the Law and willingness to its works. In this sense the Christian is free from the Law: he has become righteous and therefore acts freely according to the Law. So the Law remains; but it also does not remain, for in the end everything depends on one’s attitude towards the Law. Therewith the general theological task of the Law is completely preserved. In all stages through which a person passes in his life, it has the task to humble the proud, that is, to show men that they are sinners—a knowledge to which man indeed attains only with the help of God.”<sup>52</sup>

In viewing the various quotations cited from his writings before the year 1517, we find that Luther portrayed Christ as the God-Man who was fully qualified to atone for the sins of the world. Christ fulfilled the Law by His perfect love and obedience even unto death for the sinner. He thereby also rendered complete satisfaction to God's justice. The God of wrath is now a God of love in Christ. Satan can no longer demand that God deal with the sons of Adam as He dealt with him; for God did thus deal with the human race in the suffering and death of His Son. Hence also death and hell have lost their claim to possess man. The Law, moreover, is not a taskmaster for the believers, even as it no longer condemns them, for the renewed will of the believers is identical with the commandments of God's Law. In rendering a fully satisfying satisfaction to God in the sinner's stead, Christ has indeed become the Victor over all of our spiritual enemies.

Whatever label one may feel inclined to give to Luther's concept of the Atonement before 1517, it enabled him to write that consoling letter to Georg Spenlein in 1516, in which, speaking of the righteousness of God, which is given us most richly and freely, he writes: "Therefore, my sweet brother, learn Christ and Him Crucified, learn to sing unto Him and despairing in thyself to say to Him: Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, but I am Thy sin; Thou hast taken what is mine and given me what is Thine; Thou hast taken what Thou wast not and given me what I was not. Beware, lest at any time thou shouldest aspire to such purity, that thou wouldest not appear unto thee as a sinner, yes, be one. For Christ dwells only in sinners. For for that purpose He descended from heaven, where He dwelt in the righteous, that He might also dwell in sinners. Meditate on that love of His, and thou shalt see His sweetest consolation. For if it were necessary to attain to peace of conscience through our labors and afflictions, wherefore did He die? Therefore only in Him, sincerely despairing of thyself and thy works, thou shalt find peace. Thou shalt, moreover, learn from Him how He has received thee and made thy sins His own as well as His righteousness thy own."<sup>53</sup>

Christ is, indeed, the Victor, and whosoever believes in Him will not be lost and swallowed up, but will experience in his own body the victory which Christ won through His passion.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Theodosius Harnack, *Luthers Theologie mit besonderer Beziehung auf seine Versoebnungs- und Erloesungsidee* (Erlangen, 1862; new edition, Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1926—27), II, 73—74.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 55.

<sup>4</sup> M. Luther, *Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Boehlaus, 1883—), I, 52. (The Weimar edition of Luther's works will hereafter be indicated by the customary abbreviation, *W. A.*)

<sup>5</sup> Edgar M. Carlson, *The Reinterpretation of Luther* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1948), pp. 178—9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 179—180.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Philip S. Watson, *Let God Be God! An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1948), p. 118.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>13</sup> Julius Koestlin, *The Theology of Luther in Its Historical Development and Inner Harmony*, trans. Charles E. Hay (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1897), I, 105.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, II, 325.

<sup>15</sup> *W. A.*, I, 65.

<sup>16</sup> H. H. Borchert and Georg Merz (eds.), *Vorlesung ueber den Roemerbrief 1515—16*, trans. Eduard Ellwein Vol. II, *Martin Luther, Ausgewahlte Werke* (Muenchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1937). This volume will hereafter be referred to as Ellwein.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 309.

<sup>19</sup> *W. A.*, IV, 124.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 349—350.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 345.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 434.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 517.

<sup>26</sup> Erich Seeberg, *Luthers Theologie*, Vol. II, *Christus Wirklichkeit und Urbild* (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer in Stuttgart, 1937), p. 111; Ellwein, p. 203.

<sup>27</sup> Ellwein, p. 147.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 340.

- 29 Harnack, *op. cit.*, II, 325.
- 30 *W. A.*, I, 81.
- 31 *Ibid.*, III, 161.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 174.
- 33 Ellwein, p. 3.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 180.
- 35 *Ibid.*, pp. 155—156.
- 36 *Vorlesung ueber den Roemerbrief 1515/16*, ed. J. Ficker, 1923, quoted by Seeberg, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
- 37 Ellwein, p. 147.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p. 156.
- 39 *Ibid.*
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 420.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 157.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 229.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 249.
- 44 *W. A.*, I, 35.
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 Ellwein, p. 66.
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 250.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 262.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 263.
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 264.
- 52 *Op. cit.*, p. 114.
- 53 Ernst L. Enders, *Dr. Martin Luthers Briefwechsel* (Frankfurt am Main: Schriften-Niederlage des Evangel. Vereins, 1884), I, 29.
- 54 Ellwein, p. 309.

# The Dogma of Mary's Assumption

## A Symptom of Antichristian Theology

By F. E. MAYER

MANY Americans view with alarm the increasing pressure which Rome is exerting on American political life. It is of course, no secret that by means of a carefully designed program of lay indoctrination the Roman hierarchy is attempting to direct the ideologies not only of its own members but also of those outside its own communion.<sup>1</sup> Leading Protestants have charged that Rome has definite political aspirations, and serious tensions have arisen between Protestants and Romanists as a result of conflicting political and social ideologies. However, we are dismayed when leading Protestants direct their attacks against Rome exclusively on the ground that Rome may become or already is a menace to our American democratic ideals. The gulf which separates evangelical Christianity and Romanism is much wider. It is theological, religious. It is the same in 1950 as it was in 1517. Rome always has attacked and always will attack Protestantism — in so far as it is loyal to its Reformation heritage — at its jugular vein: Jesus Christ alone is Lord of His Church. In his Christmas message the Pope could not have stated the issue more clearly than he did in the words: "We ourselves, to whom divine providence has reserved the privilege of proclaiming it [the Holy Year and all the alleged blessings accruing from it for the world] and granting it to the whole world, already foresee its importance for the coming half-century." Reinhold Niebuhr puts it very mildly when he comments on this as follows: "At the risk of the charge of 'intolerance' one must confess that the words of the Pope strike a non-Roman as blasphemous."<sup>2</sup> St. Paul in 2 Thess. 2:4 has a better description. Reduced to the least common denominator, the issue between

<sup>1</sup> See Paul Blanshard, *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, especially chapters IV, VI, XI, and XII. Only recently the Pope presumed to direct the consciences of American Catholic judges to determine divorce cases according to the principles of the Roman Church rather than American jurisprudence.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Century*, January 18, 1950, 74.

Rome and evangelical Christianity may be stated in two questions: (1) Did Christ give us the final and absolute revelation of God concerning man's salvation or not? (2) Is Christ man's one and only Mediator or not? All other questions are peripheral, or better still, all other points of doctrine on which Romanists differ from evangelical Christians center in these two questions. Rome's dogmas of faith, the Mass, the priesthood, penance, purgatory, merits, the Church, saint worship, etc., etc., inevitably go back to what dogmaticians designate as the *formal* and the *material principles* of theology. And here is the unbridgeable gulf between Rome and genuine Protestantism. Everything else is only jugglery.

According to reports emanating from Rome, the *pia sententia* of Mary's Assumption is to be elevated to a dogma during the current jubilee year.<sup>3</sup> That Mary's body did not see corruption has been held by Romanists for many centuries as a "pious opinion." Many in the Roman Church have held that while the relics of other saints are to be preserved and venerated, there are no relics of Mary to receive such honor and veneration. Gradually the opinion prevailed that Mary's body not only did not see corruption, but that she was received into heaven according to body and soul. This opinion is now to be elevated to a dogma and is thus to be made an article of faith. At first glance one may dismiss this entire matter as of little significance, for what does it matter whether or not a view which has been held by some for centuries is now to be fixed as an official doctrine which must be held by all Romanists? The fact, however, is that the procedure in which this pious opinion is to become a dogma and the content of this dogma are symptomatic of Rome's *formal* and *material principles*. If and when the dogma of the Assumption is decreed, we shall have further evidence that, as Luther charged in the Smalcald Articles, (1) the Papacy establishes doctrines above and contrary to Scripture (the *formal principle*); and (2) that Rome today, as in the days of the Reformation, directs men to seek their salvation not solely in Christ (the *material principle*).

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<sup>3</sup> Msgr. Sergio Pugnedoli recently informed a press conference that the proclamation of the Assumption dogma is unlikely this year, because the pronouncement of a dogma requires the presence of 300 to 400 bishops, who could hardly be expected to make a trip to Rome for this purpose in addition to their jubilee pilgrimage. (RNS release in January, 1950.)

## I

In announcing that the Assumption of Mary may be declared as a dogma the Catholic weekly *America* defined a dogma as a part of the deposit of the faith which God expects the whole world to believe and which is to be expounded and set forth by the Church. *America* states, furthermore, that God's revelation to man ceased with the death of the last Apostle and that no additions can be made to this deposit of truth. But, so the periodical adds, many truths may have been believed implicitly until the Church saw fit to propose them also for explicit belief, as was the case when the Council of Ephesus in 431 for the first time declared officially that Mary is the Mother of God and when the Church in the thirteenth century finally fixed the dogma of the Holy Trinity. The editorial closes with the words: "Unless the Assumption was revealed to the Apostles, it cannot be (and will not be) proclaimed a dogma."<sup>4</sup> It seems that the Tridentine Fathers and their successors have heeded the Lutheran shibboleth *Sola Scriptura*. Naturally we ask the Roman theologians to produce Scripture proof for Mary's Assumption. In compliance with this request the Romanist will point to two dogmatical propositions on the basis of which Rome establishes such doctrines as are not specifically mentioned in the written Word.

In the first place, the Romanist will point to the decree of the Council of Trent, which declared in its Fourth Session that "saving truth and moral discipline are contained in the written books *and the unwritten traditions* [italics our own] which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down unto us." Since Bellarmine, Roman theologians distinguish between material and formal tradition, the former term denotes the subject matter handed down, while the latter designates the act of handing down. From John 21:25 the Roman dogmaticians infer that not all Christian doctrines have been deposited in the Scriptures and must therefore be sought in the "material traditions," the so-called shrine of the Church. The infallible Church to which has been given also the "formal tradition" will propound the "material traditions" as articles of faith as the occasion demands. The Roman dogma-

<sup>4</sup> *America*, December 24, 1949, 363.

tician Wilmers teaches that the infallible Church—the *ecclesia docens*—can develop more and more (*traditio formalis*) the truth entrusted to it (*traditio materialis*), can define it more exactly and develop the entire wealth of revelation with increasing clarity, without rejecting any doctrine previously held or adding one which had not been implicitly held.<sup>5</sup> And Adam Moehler states that, in representing Christ, the Church is the living exposition of the divine revelation and is invested with Christ's own authority and infallibility.<sup>6</sup> And the Vatican Council decreed that "all those things are to be believed with divine and Catholic faith, which are contained in the Word of God, written or handed down, and which the Church either by a solemn judgment or by her ordinary and universal *magisterium* proposes for belief as having been divinely revealed." Hence only the *ecclesia docens* can determine the extent and the content of the "material traditions" deposited in the shrine of the Church, and this Church, more specifically the hierarchy, will determine when to exercise the "formal tradition" and establish explicitly as dogma what allegedly was held implicitly since the days of the Apostles. Luther's judgment is still valid when he declared that "the Papacy is sheer enthusiasm."<sup>7</sup>

But what will Rome do when there is evidently not the least trace of Scriptural evidence for a proposed dogma? Here Rome appeals to its second dogmatical axiom, namely, that reason is the handmaid of theology. Both reason and revelation are said to be gifts of God, and there can be no conflict between them; on the contrary, reason must support revelation. Since the Assumption of Mary is generally accepted as part of the material traditions, reason is now called upon to establish this dogma as being "theologically certain." And the manner in which this doctrine is established by philosophical and theological arguments is merely symptomatic of Rome's method of establishing any dogma which is said to be revealed in the "unwritten traditions."

Opinions vary in the Roman Church today as to whether the

<sup>5</sup> Wilmers, *Handbuch der katholischen Religion*, II, 694.

<sup>6</sup> See Gustav Voss, "Johann Moehler and the Development of Dogma," *Theological Studies*, September, 1943, 420—444.

<sup>7</sup> "Denn das Papstum auch ein eitel Enthusiasmus ist." Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, 4. Cf. Part II, Art. IV. Both Articles deserve careful reading in the light of the probable proclamation of Mary's Assumption!

Assumption can be established by tradition or theological argumentation. Pohle-Preuss is not quite certain whether the Assumption rests on a dogmatic basis, or on a Scriptural argument, or on historical data. He seems to lean toward the view that it rests mainly on ecclesiastical tradition.<sup>8</sup> M. J. Scheeben admits that ecclesiastical tradition is very scant and that during the first six centuries there is no authentic witness concerning Mary's death; and if no witness concerning her glorious death is available, it seems futile to build up a historical tradition for her assumption.<sup>9</sup> Scheeben ascribes the lack of witnesses both to Mary's death and to her assumption to a *disciplina arcani*, that is to say that at a time when the Christians were still surrounded by polytheistic paganism, the proclamation of Mary's Assumption might have created the impression that Christians looked upon Mary as a goddess. But he adds that the Roman Church can establish the doctrine of Mary's Assumption on purely theological grounds and does not require a specific "material tradition." (P. 148 f.) It seems to us that Romanists should have no theological scruples to decree Mary's Assumption without further ado; for if they are in duty bound to accept her Immaculate Conception, they must by all laws of logic also accept the Assumption.

According to Scheeben, the Church has "proximate, definite, and decisive" suggestions that because of her worthiness and dignity Mary enjoyed a threefold freedom from the bondage of death: (1) Mary was not subject to the necessity of death; (2) because of her sinlessness she was free from the penal consequences of sin and hence from the law of decomposition; (3) she was free from the duration of death until the general resurrection. (P. 150.) Expanding these three points, Scheeben states that because of her complete freedom from the taint of original sin, death could not be imposed on her as a punishment. Though Mary had a mortal nature, this did not subject her to death as it does the rest of mankind, because Mary possessed a "supernatural claim" by virtue of her divine motherhood. She could therefore have been exempted

<sup>8</sup> Pohle-Preuss, *Dogmatic Theology*, B. D. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1930, Vol. VI (Mariology), 118.

<sup>9</sup> M. J. Scheeben, *Mariology*, translated by T. L. M. J. Geukres, B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1947. Vol. II, 141 f. — In the following analysis we have followed Scheeben.

from death entirely were it not for the fact that in the economy of redemption her death was necessary; necessary not as a means of cancelling man's sin, but as an evidence that she was not greater than her Son and as a proof that as her nature was truly human, so was also the nature of her divine Son human. (P. 152.) Scheeben argues further that death itself can under circumstances be something dignified and glorious. The degrading thing about death is the concomitant decomposition, the penalty and curse of sin. However, through her union with Christ as His spouse and mother, Mary could not see corruption. And this incorruption is said to agree with the threefold incorruption of her virginity: (1) She was not contaminated by another's sinful flesh when she conceived Christ; (2) her womb was not violated in any way; (3) her freedom from the *fomes* of sin was perfected through Christ's conception and therefore her body cannot be called the "body of sin."<sup>10</sup> And so Mary's incorruptible body is said to be aptly typified in the Ark of the Covenant, which was constructed of imperishable wood. (P. 158 f.) Therefore death could not hold Mary until the general resurrection, but her resurrection and glorification must take place in the shortest possible time, just as in the case of Christ, for incorrumpability and resurrection are correlative concepts. In fact, Scripture proof for this is found in Gen. 3:15. (P. 164 f.)

In support of the theological proposition that because of her divine motherhood she must share with Christ the immediate bodily resurrection and glorification, Scheeben advances four arguments. (1) Mary is the Mother of God through and in her body, and therefore a permanent separation of body and soul in her case is as impossible as in Christ. (2) Mary is the bride of Christ, and without the resurrection of her body the intimate and complete union of Christ and His Church portrayed in Ephesians 5 could not be effected. (3) The Fourth Commandment demands that Christ honor His mother, which He can do best by having her share in His own bodily resurrection and glorification. (4) Since Mary has been appointed as mankind's *mediatrix*, she must herself ex-

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<sup>10</sup> What strange inconsistency in theology! Do Roman theologians see in the act of procreation the essence of sin? If so, then why does Rome elevate matrimony to a sacrament? — It would be interesting at this point to trace Rome's views on anthropology and hamartiology and to show the wide gulf between Roman and Lutheran theology in these doctrines.

perience the fruits of the work of Christ and become the perfect surety that Christ's work is complete. In fact, as the "second Eve," she must stand at the side of Christ. (P. 166 f.)

In conclusion, the Church does not require any specific Scripture or historical evidence for the doctrine of Mary's Assumption. After all is said and done, Rome has said *A* when it established the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and it must sooner or later say *B* and proclaim the dogma of the Assumption. *Ceterum censeo*, the "Papacy is sheer enthusiasm"; its formal principle is not Scripture, but the unwritten traditions (Rome's revelation) and reason.

## II

The doctrine of Mary's Assumption is but the capstone to the entire structure of Rome's Mariology. Protestants are familiar with the extravagant statements concerning Mary's part in mankind's salvation. However, the fact dare not be overlooked that Rome does direct the sinner to Christ. It is still a Christian Church. But it is a miracle of God's grace that Romanists still find Christ as the only and all-sufficient Redeemer under the mass of Mariological appendage. According to Scheeben, Mary participates in the redemption of mankind as Eve participated in the fall of mankind. Mary is therefore addressed as *salvatrix*, *reparatrix*, *restauratrix*, *liberatrix*, *reconcilatrix*, *redemptrix*. Theologically Rome holds that Mary is not the cause of man's salvation, but the *mediatrix* of Christ's redemptive work. She is therefore not considered the primary, but the intermediate cause of man's redemption. (P. 194.) Nevertheless she co-operates with Christ, who alone is the Redeemer, and she is spoken of as a "ministering partner" in the execution of His work. (P. 196.) As the "second Eve" she is the helpmate (*adjutrix*) of the "second Adam." As both Adam and Eve, though in a different manner, are the cause of mankind's sin, and as both were conquered by the devil, so both sexes must co-operate in restoring mankind. True, according to Scripture, Adam's guilt was the greater because he was the head of the race; but Eve initiated the sin, and therefore the work of redemption must also be initiated by a woman. (P. 200.) Scheeben supports this with the following four propositions: (1) Man's redemption is the work of the Triune God, therefore the two Persons proceeding from the

Father must be represented by a created agent [?]; (2) the honor of man's redemption is to be shared not only by a human *nature* [Rome's Christology is Nestorian], but also by a human *person*; (3) one human being as a representative of mankind must passively take part in the redemption to assure its procurement for mankind in general; (4) through her participation in the redemption, Mary, as the maternal bride of Christ, has become the mother of the redeemed, and they are assured of sharing in the merits of Christ. (P. 206 f.) Space does not permit a discussion of how Mary is said to have participated in the work of Christ, especially by way of her motherhood both before and after the birth of Christ, by her being the maternal spouse of Christ, by her sharing in the joyful and sorrowful experiences of Christ, etc. Suffice it to say, that by her co-operation with Christ's sacrifice Mary has been made the *mediatrix*, through whom mankind now alone can receive the blessings of Christ's sacrifice. (P. 239.) Some extravagant statements go so far as to say that Mary's soul remained in Christ's lifeless body; that when the side of Christ was pierced, Mary assumed all the power of Christ's death to bestow new life on mankind; that Mary received the lifeless body of Christ in her bosom and has thereby symbolized the truth that she is the depository of Christ's merits. (P. 240 f.) Thus Mary has become the spiritual mother of the redeemed.

Since Mary enjoys such a unique and exalted position, it is only logical that faithful Romanists hope that the "holy father" will establish the Assumption of Mary as a dogma. They are taught to believe that only as the resurrected and ascended "Queen of heaven" (*felix coeli porta*) will she, as the "Mother of our Judge," be able to quiet the fears of the redeemed as in death they are brought before the judgment seat of Christ. In a standard dogmatics one paragraph states that Romanists should trust that at the judgment seat they will see Christ's extended arms and hear the words of pardon on His lips. But in the next paragraph they are directed to turn their eyes to the "mystic ark of the covenant" (the ascended body of Mary), who will look in mercy upon her faithful children and show them the blessed fruit of her womb.<sup>11</sup> What

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<sup>11</sup> *The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, edited by Geo. D. Smith, The Macmillan Co., 1949. Vol. I, 548.

a strange mixture of the Gospel<sup>12</sup> and the doctrines of men! Whom will the Romanist trust for his salvation: the crucified, risen, and ascended Christ or the "Mother of God," who participates in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ? Will the Romanist pray in the hour of death: Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness my beauty are, my glorious dress? or will his dying words be: Mother Mary, help me in the hour of death?

We fear less the political aspirations of Rome than the indifference of large segments of the Protestant world to Rome's anti-Christian theology.

St. Louis, Mo.

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<sup>12</sup> It is not in the scope of this study to show how even the elements of the Gospel are buried under the debris of Rome's material principle, the doctrine of work-righteousness.

# Evangelical Christianity in America and Its Significance for Evangelical Christianity in Germany

By FRITZ HAHN

(Lic. Fritz Hahn, professor of evangelical theology at the teachers' college in Darmstadt-Jugendheim, Hessa, had been sent by the U. S. Military Government in Germany to the United States to study the systems of religious education and the church schools in our country. He spent most of his time from April to July, 1949, under the direction of our Synod's Board for Parish Education, visiting our Seminary and schools in St. Louis and Concordia Teachers College in River Forest. Dr. J. M. Weidenschilling has summarized and translated Professor Hahn's report. Professor Hahn is fully conscious of the fact that a period of three months is insufficient to venture a judgment on American Christianity. Though the report does not contain any findings with which our readers are not acquainted, we submit it nevertheless. Professor Hahn points out where American Lutheranism can make a rich contribution in the reconstruction of the German churches. At the same time the American reader will ask himself whether or not it is possible to strengthen our churches in those areas which Professor Hahn considers so significant. — F. E. M.)

## I

1. The first impressions on a German visitor are disturbing and confusing, because he is here confronted by a tremendous multiplicity of churches and sects. The many divisions in Protestantism are due in part to the various historical backgrounds and to the diversity of languages formerly used in their church services. Furthermore, the tendency toward individualism and independence, particularly strong among the pioneers, was an important factor in producing many separate church bodies. That human interests, bigotry, and pharisaism contributed toward the formation of sects is not to be denied. American evangelical Christianity is in no sense of the word homogeneous.

2. This outward diversity seems to reflect the theological divergences, which cover the entire range from stanch orthodoxy to crass rationalism. At the right wing, that of strict orthodoxy, stand The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. Both groups adhere to the Lutheran Confessions of the sixteenth century, which form the basis of their preaching and church structure. To the left, or liberal, wing belong many Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist churches. However, among these groups there are some pronounced

Fundamentalists. Within various church bodies there are influential groups that adhere to the Biblical message or are at least giving consideration to the substance of the Gospel. Dr. Joachim Wach, formerly of Leipzig and for a number of years at the University of Chicago Divinity School, and considered an authority in the field of philosophies of religion, told me that liberalism is on the decline. However, in many denominations the preachers in the age groups from 40 to 60 are evidently still guilty of curtailing and falsifying the Biblical message or converting it into a legalistic moralism. I gained the impression that the Missouri Lutherans, the American Lutheran Church, and perhaps also the United Lutheran Church (concerning which I have been informed only indirectly) have a particularly great responsibility as to the future of evangelical Christianity in the U. S. A. I believe, moreover, that the Lutheran churches can meet their responsibility only if they do not isolate themselves theologically, but will show readiness to study problems that have been live issues in Germany during the past fifteen years. Such frankness need in no wise lead to a hasty, false unionism.

3. In spite of the multitude of denominations the German visitor gradually recognizes several principles which seem to be characteristic of practically all American evangelical churches. Chief among these is the strong emphasis on the congregation. The individual congregation is the center of the church life. Differences may appear in the various denominations, but according to my observations the church life is generally marked by a strong and independent congregationalism. Undoubtedly, the separation of Church and State as provided by the Constitution strengthens the principle of congregationalism. The Lutheran Church in America has preserved a good heritage of the Reformation in truer form than has been the case in many European Lutheran churches, for American Lutheranism is predominantly congregational, European Lutheranism episcopal. The congregation is sovereign with respect to all its external and internal administration. The local congregation determines its confessional standard, calls and discharges its pastors and also teachers in case it maintains a church school. According to the model constitution for the congregations of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, "The congregation as a body shall have the supreme power in the external and internal administration of its affairs. Any right or duty which may have been delegated by the congregation to an individual member or a group of members within the congregation shall always be subject to revision by the congregation."

Because of the principle on which the congregation is founded, the members are held responsible for the church life of their congregation. The number of non-theologically trained members, active in church work, is enormous in comparison with their number in Germany. In America laymen serve as superintendents of Sunday schools, as teachers in Bible classes for adults, in the Church's program for adult education, in its high schools, and in visiting the homes. It was my impression that the church members not only participate in church activities to a greater extent than our people do, but that they even direct these to a considerable degree.

That the American church members are conscious of their responsibility toward the Church is evident particularly in their willingness to contribute toward its support. Since the Church receives no support from the State and may not tax its members, its income is dependent entirely on the personal contributions of its members. What impressed me most deeply was that the freewill offerings of the people not only take care of the expenses of the local congregation and pay the salaries of the pastor, one or more teachers, organist, janitor, but also meet the financial needs of church colleges, seminaries, universities, and of numerous charities and missions. Such extensive church activities are possible only because all members are willing to give liberally.

In attempting to describe the church life in America, we must not overlook the importance of the church schools. In the State-supported public schools no religion may be taught. Nor does the State grant any support to the church schools. Among the evangelical churches it is particularly the Lutheran Missouri Synod that has recognized the value of parochial schools. It is satisfied only with such schools as not only provide the children with Biblical instruction, but also make possible their whole training by means of religion as the unifying principle. The congregations bring tremendous sacrifices in order to erect school buildings and to support one or more teachers. The Lutherans feel that these schools are of vital importance for the existence of Christian churches in America. The establishment of Lutheran high schools is still in its early stages.

## II

Of what significance for evangelical Christianity in Germany is the evangelical Christianity in the United States? I shall call attention to the following points:

1. *The sovereignty of the individual congregation.* This is beyond a doubt in accord with the New Testament and the Reformation.

Theoretically German Christianity will agree that the individual congregation should hold this central position, but what is being done about this in practice? An examination of the constitution of the evangelical churches in Westphalia and Hessa-Nassau will show that these bodies are seriously concerned about the realization of the congregational principle. But I do not have the impression that the Evangelical Church in Germany as a whole has gone that way. We should have the courage to become much more independent, more like the ancient Christian Church. During the church-struggle (*Kirchenkampf*, 1933—45) many of our congregations successfully resisted the Nazi regime, because they fought the battles independently of an authoritarian and centralized church government.

2. *The position of the non-theological church member.* We must make much greater efforts to draw our laity into the congregational life. I must say that also in this respect promising beginnings have been made in a number of church groups in Germany. But that will be possible only if we revise the still widely spread pseudo-Lutheran idea of the ministry. The office of preaching has been given to the entire congregation. Today a pastor is burdened with too much work and too many activities. To the extent that we can draw our church members into important church work and put our confidence in them, will their willingness to give liberally of time and talents increase. Instead of raising the necessary funds by assessment, we should train our laity in the art of Christian giving by encouraging them to give locally to their church. Of course, such a practice must be introduced under wise pastoral guidance.

3. *The relationship of Church and State.* We should prepare ourselves for a more complete separation of Church and State. We had better give up once and for all the illusion of a so-called national Church (*Volkskirche*) and carry out the plan of Barmen. Certainly this problem will not be solved at once nor by dispensing with the customary church tax and urging voluntary giving. Rather we must find ways and means for training our congregations to become independent and to give freely.

4. *The Church and society.* We can learn from evangelical Christianity in America concerning the Church's responsibility in regard to society. In the States I never heard anything said about what the Church may expect from society, but rather what the Church owes to society. I am thinking here in particular of the Lutheran school system. We should be more concerned about strengthening and expanding church schools and establishing more of them. Of sig-

nificance to us is also the position which the teachers of church schools in America hold. There the Lutheran teacher, who is always occupied with Biblical instruction, is regarded as a servant of the Word. In the diploma of vocation which the Lutheran Missouri Synod issues to its teachers it is stated: "The congregation has called N.N. to the sacred office of a servant of the Word." His office is defined as being a part of the public ministry. For us this is a lesson that as pastors we should have much more sympathetic understanding and consideration for the difficult service which our teachers render as servants of the Word in their Biblical instruction. We owe our teachers brotherly service. Much indifference and haughtiness on our part would then vanish. More joint conferences and seminars of teachers and pastors should be regarded as highly important.

I would also call attention to the importance of instructing our adults in Biblical, doctrinal, ethical, and social problems. This work should be turned over more to the laity itself and not left entirely to the pastors. The work of our "evangelical academies" \* ought to receive greater support from our congregations and be utilized by them. Then our church members would become better trained for their place in the political and social life. I was also able to observe that the radio programs of the Church exert a powerful influence upon public life in America. The Lutheran Hour is a mighty missionary agency. We, too, should spare no efforts in promoting religious radio broadcasts, sponsored by the Church.

5. Can the Anglo-American theology teach us anything? The theology of the Missouri Lutherans and of the American Lutheran Church is a fixed and closed entity. Their strict adherence to the Old-Protestant dogmatics has preserved these bodies from becoming liberal. They do not recognize the possibility of a sober Biblical theology having a legitimate place between liberalism and orthodoxy. I observed that particularly with respect to their doctrine of the Scriptures there is a deep chasm between those Lutheran Churches and us. This difference was clearly recognizable in the discussions at Bad Boll which were initiated by the Missouri Lutheran Church.

What should be of special importance to us Germans is the theological solution of ethical problems. As Paul Tillich, during his visit in Germany in 1948, said: "America, while still following Europe's lead

\* Such academies are regularly held at Bad Boll, where representatives of the various professions gather for a week to study the religious, or moral, or spiritual obligations of the doctor, the lawyer, the farmer, the merchant, the teacher, etc., in modern society.

ED. NOTE

in historical and systematic theology, is far ahead of it in ethics." (*Christian Century*, June 15, 1949, p. 732.) Interest in ethical problems has increased considerably in Germany in the last years. To what extent this will develop from a consistent adherence to Continental theology or as a result of the European postwar situation or because of Anglo-American influence, cannot be determined at present.

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#### ON MEETING DATE LINES

It may be of interest to our readers to become acquainted with the date lines (or is the word deadlines?) which the editors and publishers of this monthly journal must observe every month. We submit the schedule for the March issue.

*January 12:* The copy of all feature articles, the homiletical section, the "Brief Studies," and the "Book Reviews" must be in the hands of the Managing Editor for necessary editing.

*January 17:* Copy is sent to the publisher.

*January 27:* Copy of the "Theological Observer" material is sent to the publisher.

*February 1:* The galley sheets are sent by the publisher to every member of the Faculty of Concordia Seminary for censorial reading.

*February 6:* The Editorial Staff carefully examines all the submitted corrections and gives its final approval.

*February 7:* The Editor makes the selection of the material to appear in the next issue and "makes up the copy."

*February 15:* The page proof of the issue is submitted to the Editor for his final O.K.

*March 1:* The March issue reaches the subscriber.

## HOMILETICS

*A Series of Sermon Studies for the Church Year*

### PALM SUNDAY

MATT. 11:25-30

*The Text and the Day.* — Behold thy King! That is the natural theme for Palm Sunday. If the sermon is to enter into the spirit of this high festival, then it must be adorned with the rich pageantry and with the festive terminology of the regular Gospel for the day. The theme attempts to provide the bridge between our text and the Gospel Lesson for Palm Sunday. The clear and striking passage in the Epistle about the humiliation and the sacrifice of Christ could very well be used in the sermon (see II A of outline).

*Notes on Meaning.* — V. 25. Jesus uses the unqualified address "Father!" because He is in the true, essential sense the Son of God the Father. Upon this fact rests subdivision I A of the outline, for this is one of the instances in our text pointing out the divine majesty of Jesus.

The terms "wise and intelligent" and "babes" are used to characterize the manner in which these people have reacted to the Gospel, i. e., Jesus here speaks of the two different attitudes of people after (not before!) they have heard the Gospel. The wise and intelligent are all those who reject the message of the Gospel and cling to the Christless views and learning which they have by their own ability. Thus God can give them nothing. Typical of them were the scribes and Pharisees in the days of Jesus. The "babes" are those in whom the power of the Gospel has been able to sweep aside opposing human wisdom, making them as free of acquired godless wisdom and as open-minded as infants for the reception of the riches of the Gospel of grace. Caution: "1 Cor. 1:26 makes it plain that the sense of Christ's word is not that the Gospel is intended only for the ignorant and not for the educated" (Lenski). The words "these things" refer to the Gospel of salvation by grace, through faith in Christ. This revelation of the Gospel of salvation to those who are as babes is, of course, tantamount to bestowing

the gifts of this Gospel to them, for the Gospel does not only reveal and offer the gifts of God's grace, but it also creates at the same time the faith by which they receive these gifts—The sermon outline makes use of one phase of all this. In subdivision II D we have: While He gives us all the riches of His kingdom, He requires nothing of us. Those who receive the riches of God's grace are not required to contribute anything toward the reception of these gifts, neither intelligence, nor learning, nor anything else. Nor could they contribute anything if they would. The only condition which God makes is that the recipients of the gifts of His grace must be as infants who have nothing to offer and everything to receive. And even this condition "as of infants" is not a contribution of the individual, but the work of God through the power of His Word.—The words "I thank Thee" (v. 25) and verse 26 indicate that Jesus fully approves of this method of the Father in dealing with men, i. e., that here as well as in all things His view and the Father's view are one, and that the Father's dealings with men can properly be attributed to the Son, as it has been done in the outline (II D).

V. 27. Ήάντα includes everything on earth, in heaven and hell, in time and in eternity. Subdivision II A is based on the words "are delivered unto Me," with which Christ indicates that He is true man, for only according to His human nature did Christ have to be given power over all things; according to His divine nature He always did possess such power.—The fact that Father and Son alone have "an adequate and full knowledge" (Meyer) of each other indicates a most intimate relationship, and thus shows the transmundane majesty of Jesus (see I B).

V. 28. "Ye that labor and are heavy laden": These terms do not exclude the Christian. "All the vain, fruitless striving after peace, contentment, happiness, rest, and joy, which is found the world over, is this constant laboring. . . . Then the suffering, unrest, trouble, fear, grief, pain, an evil conscience, against which men rebel so vainly, adds to the labor and the load" (Lenski).

Vv. 29 and 30. "Yoke" is the guidance and discipline of the Word of God to which Christians are to subject themselves. To encourage us to take this yoke, Jesus says: "learn of Me," i. e., learn through personal relationship with Me that (not "for") I am gentle

(rather than "meek") and humble (lowly) in heart, i.e. I am a kind Friend, not a tyrant who demands harsh and impossible things. "For My yoke is pleasant (rather than "easy"), and My burden is light": the yoke and burden which the Word of God places upon the Christian are the labors of love and gratitude, the pleasant fruits of faith.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — Much of the effect, power, and beauty of this sermon will depend upon the skill of the preacher to base his sermon clearly on the words of the text and yet develop it throughout against the background of the historical Palm Sunday, coloring it richly with the terminology and imagery of the Gospel for the Day and with the powerful phrases of Old Testament prophecies. If the preacher were to make mention of the historical happenings on Palm Sunday only in the introduction to his sermon and thereafter concentrate on the thoughts of the text without further reference to the contents of the Gospel for Palm Sunday, he would not be making the fullest use of a fine opportunity presented by this text to preach a message which, though fully adjusted to satisfy the workaday needs of his hearers, is yet at every turn of thought rich with the atmosphere of those momentous events which are uppermost in the minds of believers at the threshold of Holy Week.

*Problem and Goal.* — The burden of the sermon is to present to the hearer the Scriptural image of his Savior-King, both in the blazing glory of His heavenly might and majesty and in the soft glow of His gentle love for sinners. In a world hovering on the brink of social and political chaos, in a world in which the name of God is mocked or ignored, in a world which has enthroned man as its stupidly proud yet blindly groping and helpless "god," in a world in which hope itself is dying, in this world the children of God need to be encouraged by new visions of the might and majesty of their heavenly King, who still rules the universe with unhampered omnipotence and who is at the same time the gentle, loving Savior of the individual. Palm Sunday, with its royal entry into Jerusalem and with its proximity to the solemn events of Holy Week, when Christ's love for us drove Him to make the supreme sacrifice, is a most suitable occasion to bring this needed message to the believer.

*Illustrations.* — There will be little room in this sermon for

illustrations beyond those suggested by the vivid account of the Gospel and by the contents of the prophecies and of the Epistle. Brief comparisons between Christ and earthly rulers will be helpful.

*Outline:*

BEHOLD THY KING

I. Behold Him in His royal might and majesty.

- A. The Lord of heaven and earth is His Father (25 a).
- B. He and the Father are bound together by the most intimate relationship (27 b).
- C. Only through Him can man come to know his God (27 c).
- D. He holds omnipotent sway over all things (27 a).

II. Behold Him in His gentle love for us.

- A. Out of love for us Me became a humble man (27 a).
- B. With deep concern for us He calls: Come, and I will give peace to your troubled and burdened souls (28).
- C. He offers to be a gentle Master, whose demands are pleasant and light (29 and 30).
- D. While He gives us all the riches of His kingdom, He requires nothing of us (25 b and 26).

A. R. RIEP

MAUNDY THURSDAY

LUKE 22:27-30

*The Text and the Day.* — The day derives its name from the injunction of our Lord to humility and love as emphasized in the Gospel (cf. also v. 34). The text is associated with the foot washing and thus emphasizes humility through service, but goes a step farther in promising an appointment for all who follow Christ.

*Notes on Meaning.* — For a background of the text read especially vv. 24-26, with which the words are associated, as well as John 13:1-20, which illustrates v. 27. For a similar occasion earlier in the ministry of Jesus see Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48; and Matt. 18:1-5. "Jockeying for position" is nothing new in the Church.

V. 27. A favorite O. T. title reflected here: Servant of the Lord. Already a paradox. In this service He was truly great. His leadership lies in this service, Matt. 20:28. It was willing (John 4:34;

Luke 22:42), loving (John 15:9), sacrificial of His own will (John 6:38) and person, and complete (through hell and death). All this not for self but for mankind, that it may be fit to serve (Eph. 2:5-10).

The implication from the context is that this leadership through service is the mark of a disciple.

V. 29. This loyalty prompted Jesus to bequeath a royal rule (kingdom) to His disciples. Here is another paradox. In His service Jesus was actually making a conquest. The rule given by the Father to the Son was the power to conquer Satan through His active and passive obedience, and this power or rule Jesus bequeaths to His disciples by the Gospel. V. 30. The disciples as rulers with Christ are intimately associated with their King and by the Gospel judge the world both now and on the Last Day.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — The term kingdom as used in the N. T. is often misunderstood to mean a place or a domain. Its primary concept is a royal rule. This rule is the saving activity of the Gospel. We enter into the Kingdom of God when God sets up His rule in our hearts. We in turn rule in this kingdom when we use the Gospel. The emphasis is on the *power* of the Gospel, which routs the devil, Rom. 1:16. It is this rule, so characteristic of true discipleship, which should be emphasized. For a fuller discussion of the term kingdom see F. E. Mayer's essay in the *Proceedings of the Texas District* for 1942, also Luther's Explanation of the Second Petition in the *Large Catechism*.

*The Problem and Goal.* — According to the world's standards, rulers are those who rule for themselves, whether in government, business, or society. Whatever service is given is usually for personal benefit. This standard is constantly seeping into the church. The infection to "run things" is not a modern disease. The devil has a way of making us proud of our "humility" and "service."

The goal will be to emphasize that true greatness is in service as exemplified by Jesus: readiness to do His will, impelled by a love born of faith (Rom. 12:1), regardless of the consequences. Peter caught the significance, v. 33. This is a service of the total self and thus has many ways of expression. Service as a Christian parent, citizen, witness bearer, bread winner, etc.

But this service is also given a responsibility, namely, to rule

with Christ by the Gospel. This rule helps the Christian overcome sin in his own life. As he uses it in bearing witness, he extends the rule of Christ into the lives of others. Note how this promise is effected in the small group of disciples. The rule of God through them was extended over many people. Christians still have this power to rule through the Gospel. "Our good works are, on the one hand, a glorious triumph of Christ in us and at the same time a tribute to Him who by His great salvation has established His kingdom in us." While the complete conquest of Satan will not take place until Judgment Day, the "mopping-up job" is left for His disciples until that time.

This same Gospel which rules in the hearts of Christians becomes a standard for judging the world, Mark 16:16, both now and on that Day.

*Outline:*           **THE PARADOX OF DISCIPLESHIP**

I. Rulers who serve.

- A. Christ, the Example in this paradox, the Servant of the Lord.
- B. True leadership lies in a life of service.

II. Servants who rule.

- A. By His service Christ destroyed the powers of darkness and set up His kingdom.
- B. By the Gospel He bequeaths this rule to His disciples.

ARTHUR C. REPP

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**GOOD FRIDAY**

MATT. 27:45-51 a

*Text and Day.* — Two liturgical traditions obtain for Good Friday. The first is penitential, the climax of mourning. Preaching that purports to be Christian in such a session of worship must be effective in knifing through sentiment and establishing clear concepts and insights into the atoning work of Christ. The second liturgical emphasis, by contrast, focuses upon the completed work of Our Lord. Such a service reflects the joyous confidence of the Christian in the consummated Atonement. This text provides for also that emphasis.

*Notes on Meaning.* — St. Matthew assembles an account of the

climax of the Passion story, which lends itself well to a review of the outstanding theology of the Crucifixion.—The portents of nature were not merely a physical hint of spiritually significant events, but they were in the divine plan for penetrating the apathy of the onlookers.—Vv. 46 and 47 mark the apex of the redemptive work, "the atoning ingredient in the death of Christ" (F. Pieper). The reference to Psalm 22 makes this Word from the Cross a hint as to the further pondering of Christ in the Passion. The life of the Savior had been arduous, and the Savior had stood every test. The conspiracy of the leaders of the people, the inconstancy of His disciples, the miscarriage of civil justice, the physical pain of the Passion, heightened the agony of His need. Now He cries to His Father for help, counting on the prerogative of every child of God since Creation, namely, that God would hear. And He would not. The sinless Son of God is left to face the aloofness and the wrath of God as though He were the chief of sinners. Cf. Isaiah 53 and 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Heb. 4:15; 5:7-9.—The bystanders are uncomprehending. Cf. John 1: 10-11.—V. 48 presents the item without the word from the Cross "I thirst." Matthew likewise omits the word "It is finished"; unless he supposes to include it as well as "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," in v. 50. At the start of the crucifixion the Savior refused the drink, which was mixed with an anodyne and was a vestige of humaneness in the barbarous procedure. Then He wanted to face the full consciousness of His task, of His obedience for the sins of the world. But now the task is done. He has tasted death for every man. The Godforsakeness was the climax. Now the task is finished, and the Redeemer inclines toward the goal, satisfied.—Matthew twice speaks of the "loud voice" of the Savior. These are proclamations, interpretations, of an inner event; they are not sobs or ejaculations. The Priest is simultaneously Prophet. The supplement by the other Evangelists describes the Savior's yielding His spirit to the Father in physical death. "I go to the Father," He had told the disciples a few hours before; John 16:5. He had quailed at the thought of the intervening road. But now the task is done; and it is done in such a way that we can see it and rejoice in it.—The incident concerning the Temple veil must have been deeply stirring to every Jew in the days of Christ and to every Jewish reader of St. Matthew.

It was a barrier which only the High Priest could traverse; and the passing through it betokened the forgiveness of sins through the blood. Now it had been passed once for all time. Cf. Hebrews 9 and 10.—Now the great act of the Atonement has spoken of peace to the people of the Old Covenant, and brought its symbols and forecasts to an end. Now Christ has brought peace to us all.

*Preaching Problem and Goal.*—The most readily apparent problem of the worshiper on Good Friday is his assumption that his sense of sorrow, his commiseration with the Savior is a means of achieving forgiveness. This text emphasizes that our Lord faced pain infinitely more exquisite than physical suffering, and faced it victoriously. He, He altogether—not our sense of sorrow, but only He—gained our forgiveness and reconciled us to God.

*Preaching Pitfalls.*—The incidents of the text need to be grouped in such a way that the doctrinal perspective of the story emerges. The text has been sectioned as it is so that the puzzling detail of the resurrection need not be incorporated into this sermon, and the accent can be thrown on the act of the redemption.—The text should be useful in counteracting the usual pitfall in Lenten preaching, namely, to make the physical suffering of Jesus the outstanding item of the Passion.

*Illustrations.*—The preacher is tempted to construct analogies and illustrations from justice, buying and selling, Old Testament sacrifices. This text of all in the Bible demands taste on the part of the preacher, that he does not use illustrations which are cheaper than the thing they illustrate. The story is vivid enough; if the setting of the Savior's thought in Psalm 22 be sufficiently explored for concrete values, little more will be necessary.

*Outline:*

THE CLIMAX OF OUR SAVIOR'S SUFFERING

I. The climax of pain.

- A. Physical death by crucifixion.
- B. The being forsaken by God.

II. The climax of achievement.

- A. Finished what He had known He would have to suffer.
- B. Finished what He had set out to do—redeem us to God.

### III. The climax of impressiveness.

- A. The tokens for that day — the darkness, the loud voice, the Temple veil.
- B. The tokens for our day: the Gospel of forgiveness bringing the values of the Cross into our own hearts. May we not callously overlook them in disbelief, apathy, or misunderstanding; but may we focus our hearts on Christ as our Redeemer.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

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### EASTER SUNDAY

JOHN 20:11-18

*The Text and the Day.* — Neither subtle nor highhanded tactics need to be employed to bring the text into harmony with the Propers of the Day.

*Notes on Meaning.* — Mary Magdalene, from whom Jesus had driven seven devils, was one of the faithful followers who ministered to Jesus of their substance to the very end. Luke 8:1-3; Mark 15:40 f; Matt. 27:55 f; Mark 15:40 f; John 19:25; Matt. 27:61. She was the first to see and to speak with the risen Christ. Mary had been at the tomb earlier in the morning, Mark 16:1. When she saw the stone rolled away, she left Mary and Salome and ran back to Jerusalem to inform Peter and John. John 20:1-10. Mary had returned and "stood without at the sepulcher, weeping." Mary had gone through grueling experiences. Her faith and her hope were crushed. Angels and her Master appear and speak with her. She neither recognizes nor heeds them, vv. 12-14. She proposes to solve her problem in her own foolish way, v. 15. A faulty knowledge of the Scriptures, a weak faith, doubt, and clinging to their own notions rather than to the Word of God, cut furrows in the brow and wounds in the hearts even of Christians. "Why weepest thou?" vv. 13, 15. What is the real reason for your grief and worry? Not until she heard and listened to the voice of Jesus, who called her by her name, did joy come to her heart, v. 16.

Note the sympathetic treatment of His erring disciples on the part of Jesus. — Study the text for interplay of tenses, especially between aorist, imperfect, and historical present for vivid description.

"Whom seekest thou?" Mary sought a Christ after her own

imagination. This is always a fatal mistake. She thought of a Christ who would resume the old, earthly relations that existed before His death. Jesus corrects this notion with "μή μου ἀπτοῦ," v. 17. "Jesus indicated that Mary must cease clinging to Him," A. T. Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 853. He was soon to ascend to the Father and enter also according to His human nature into the full use of His divine majesty. Since His resurrection Jesus refers to His disciples as His "brethren," v. 17; Matt. 28:10. Yet the relation between Jesus, the only-begotten Son, to the Father is not the same as that of His "brethren" to God the Father. He does not say: "Our God, our Father." Nevertheless there is brotherly communion and fellowship of believers with Christ, Rom. 8:16-17. Mary did as she was told, v. 18. It is our sacred privilege to go and tell the story and the blessings of Christ's glorious resurrection.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — Don't lay yourself open for a libel suit by identifying Mary Magdalene with the woman of the city, Luke 7:37. Neither is it profitable to enter a theological speculation on the successive stages in the progress of Christ's exaltation, nor on "the process of glorification through which His body was passing," nor on His "bodily and spiritual transition."

*Problem and Goal.* — The tear-drenched earth must be given the assurance of Christ's resurrection. See Catechism, Question 152.

*Illustrations.* — When Jesus comes to us in our daily lives by His manifold visitations, we are prone not to recognize Him. John 1:26; Luke 24:16; John 21:4.

#### *Outline:*

The watch, the empty tomb, angels proclaim: "He is risen!" The heavens are ablaze, celebrating Christ's triumphant resurrection. Yet at His first appearance on earth His first recorded utterance was the question

#### "WHY WEEPEST THOU?"

##### I. To whom is the question addressed?

- A. To Mary Magdalene, a faithful follower of Jesus, in agony of soul.
- B. To all who are torn with their doubts, griefs, sufferings in this perplexed world.

II. The question demands an explanation.

- A. Mary betrays her neglect to remember and believe the words of Jesus, v. 13. Luke 18:31-33; John 11:25; Matt. 26:32; John 2:19.— Is that the reason why we weep?
- B. Mary tries to solve her problems in her own way. V. 15.
- C. Mary fashioned a Christ in her own image. "Whom seekest thou?"

III. The question is asked to achieve an intended purpose.

- A To bring Mary to a better understanding of the Scriptures, to increase her faith, to bring her to enjoy the blessings of His resurrection, vv. 16-17. Catechism, Question 152.
- B. To make her a joyful witness of Christ and a willing messenger to proclaim His resurrection to others. Vv. 17-18.

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HERMAN W. BARTELS

QUASIMODOGENITI

LUKE 20:34-38

*The Text and the Day.*—The glorious Easter message of our Savior's resurrection is properly followed either by stories of His own post-resurrection appearances or by other Scripture lessons regarding the resurrection life of believers.

*Notes on Meaning.*—Consult parallel passages, Matt. 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27. Jesus, replying to a specific question of the Sadducees, restricts the discussion to the covenant people of God. Hence, "children of this world" and "children of God" are not two opposite groups, but one and the same, the contrast being between their life on earth ("sons of this age," R. S. V.) and their post-resurrection life in the presence of God ("sons of God," R. S. V.).—V. 35—"accounted worthy"; this phrase must, of course, be interpreted in the light of many clearer passages that rule out all merit on the part of man in obtaining life eternal, which is God's free gift of grace. The meaning can only be: those whom God "according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:5) counts worthy. Similarly St. Paul in Philippians 3: "attain the resurrection," while disclaiming in that very passage all personal righteousness and stressing the righteousness of Jesus Christ obtained by faith. The

believer, while resting wholly on God's grace in Christ, nevertheless is exhorted to "strive to enter in," "to endure unto the end," "to work out his salvation with fear and trembling."

Vv. 35 b-36.—The spiritual nature of eternal life is here emphasized. We must frankly admit that we are here confronted by a mystery and a miracle. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body," 1 Cor. 15:44. The Sadducees rejected the doctrines of the resurrection, angels, and spirits (v. 27; Acts 23:8). Having spiritual bodies, the resurrected believers are "like" (Matt. and Mark), and in this particular respect are "equal" (Luke), unto the angels. Being spiritual, freed from all the limitations of a material body, they, like the angels, will neither marry nor continue to live in the married estate in which they lived on earth. And as there are no deaths in heaven, there is no need for replacements by propagation. The God-given purpose of matrimony, the propagation of the human race and helpful companionship, have been fulfilled in this life.

Vv. 37-38. Since the Sadducees had appealed to Moses, Jesus quotes him only; otherwise He might have referred to even clearer passages on the resurrection, such as Job 19:25-27; Is. 26:19; Daniel 12:2.—Jesus, according to Matthew and Mark, rebuked these religious philosophers for not knowing the Scripture and hence being much in error on this doctrine. Though the O. T. Scripture had taught the resurrection of the body, it had nowhere declared that the *mode* of existence in the future life would be the same as in this present age. Hence their speculative question was baseless.—Jesus also rebuked them for not knowing "the power of God" (Matt.). Shall the Creator who formed the first human body out of the earth not be able to reorganize a disintegrated body?

*Problem and Goal.*—Christ's endorsement of the O. T. doctrine of the resurrection and His emphasis on the spiritual nature of the life in heaven must receive the chief attention. The preacher should be conscious of the fact that the exposition and application of this text may bring a real disappointment to some who, having been happily married here, and deeply grieving over the loss of a Christian spouse, are hopefully looking forward to a "reunion" in heaven as a continuance of their married state. The correction must be made gently and sympathetically. The possible present

disappointment should be offset by the comforting assurance that there will be no disappointment in heaven; that the joys of heaven, the presence of God and the angels, companionship with the saints made perfect, will supersede all the satisfaction found in the marriage state on earth. Reference may well be made to such passages as Psalm 73:25-26; John 14:1-3; Phil. 1:23; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 2:1-4. That there will also be recognition of those who were members of a family on earth may safely be deduced from the account of Christ's transfiguration.

*Preaching Pitfalls.*—Bear in mind the limited scope of the text. Only the people of the covenant are here under consideration. There is no reference to the future state of heathen and unbelievers.—V. 38—"all live unto Him." Possibly an editorial gloss. In any case it is better not to use the pulpit for dwelling on the various possible meanings of this highly condensed statement.

*Outline:*  
CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION LIFE

I. There is a resurrection of the dead.

- A. Moses spoke of the Lord as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, all of whom had been dead for centuries. In the accounts by Matthew and Mark, God is quoted as the Speaker. Cf. Exodus 3.
- B. Jesus declares that the Lord is not the God of dead men (they cannot know Him), but of the living.

II. Some aspects of the resurrection life.

- A. Those with the Lord in glory will be like (equal to) the angels.
  1. They will have *spiritual* bodies, and yet be recognizable.
  2. They will not die, being now in life everlasting.
- B. There will be no marriage.
  1. No deaths, hence no need of replacements.
  2. No contention as to marital relationships as they existed on earth.
  3. Hence the problem posed by the Sadducees will never arise.

*Conclusion.*—The divine wisdom here displayed by Jesus must be reassuring to our faith. His compassion with the bereaved is expressed in John 11 and elsewhere. He will comfort us until we are with Him in glory and need no more comfort.

MARTIN WALKER

### MISERICORDIAS DOMINI

JOHN 3:16-21

*The Text and the Day.*—With the "Compassion of the Lord" (Misericordias Domini) so eminently extolled in our text, one need not at length explain the fitness of our Text for the Day. Rejoicing over this very thing, the Introit chants about "the goodness of the Lord," while the Epistle lesson tells about His "bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness," and the Gospel speaks of His Shepherd love, "giving His life for the sheep." It is, then, a most fitting text, inducing us to pray all the more fervently with the Collect for the Day that God make men partakers of so great a salvation.

*Notes on Meaning.*—Nothing but mad unbelief can mistake the meaning of God's love set forth in v. 16. But to make doubly sure that no one will mistake it, v. 17 is added. This sin-ridden world might well have supposed that God sent His Son to condemn it.—But—and here is the marvel of God's love—God sent His Son "that the world through Him might be saved." In fact, now that His Son has come and removed the world's sin and its curse, God's principle of judgment deals no more with sin but with His Son. V.18 sets forth His principle of judgment in unmistakable language. So completely is God's judgment now centered in His Son that the believer in spite of his sin is literally excused from judgment, (*οὐ κρίνεται*), while the unbeliever has been judged "already" (*ηδη*), not because of his sin, but "because he has not believed on the name of the only-begotten Son of God." There is, then, no escaping this pointed truth, that judgment hangs on the accepting or rejecting of God's love offered in His Son. Vv. 19 and 20 not only supplement this thought; but since these words are prophetic, they give us a picture of rubbing elbows with people still living, who are already judged because of their unbelief. A most solemn truth! All the more emphasis, then, on the hopeful ring in v. 21. "He that doeth the truth" (*ποιῶν*—He that not only

accepts but acts upon the truth of God's love) will escape, not because of what he does, but because of what God in His love will do with him. He will be brought out of darkness to the light; will have his sin revealed, and be cleansed and purified through the redeeming work of the Son; all of which are works that "are wrought in God."

*Preaching Pitfalls.*—The preacher, faithfully using and teaching this text, will find every pitfall so flooded by the outpouring of God's love in these verses that no matter where he should slip or falter for a moment, he will find himself swept back by that tide of love and left standing before the Son, whom God in His love gave to the world.

*Problem and Goal.*—The finest theme for this text has long been worded by the Apostle in Heb. 2:3. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" The preacher's problem and goal must be nothing short of nailing up every door of escape for his hearers, leaving only the Son standing with His outstretched arms, pleading: "Come unto Me!"

*Illustrations.*—I am afraid that all illustrations — whether picturing a man on a sinking boat, despising the only life belt, or showing a man in a burning house with every escape cut off, refusing to jump into the saving net spread for him — fall short of describing the folly and stupidity of the sinner who neglects the salvation which God has spread for him in His only-begotten Son.

*Outline:*

HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE JUDGMENT?

- I. Christ prepared the escape. V. 16.
  - A. God sent Him for that purpose. V.17.
  - B. Man needs nothing more. V. 18.
- II. Accept this! V. 21.
  - A. Neglecting to do so will keep man in darkness with no escape. Vv. 19-20.
  - B. Doing so will reveal God's work of love, effecting man's escape. V. 21.

A. W. SCHELP

## JUBILATE

JOHN 11:1-16

*The Text and the Day.* — This Sunday underscores the truth that we Christians can rejoice amid tribulations. The risen Redeemer has overcome all our enemies, including death, so that we need fear nothing. The text is an illustration and application of the Gospel, and throughout the account of the events at Bethany runs the Jubilate of the Introit and the Gradual.

*Notes on Meaning.* — V. 1. Lazarus means "whom God helps." Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem. The illness of Lazarus was of a serious nature, as is indicated by the repeated references to it. — V. 2. Mary's deed is reported by John in the next chapter, vv. 1-3. — V. 3: Note that the sisters do not say that Lazarus loved Jesus, but that Jesus loved Lazarus. Lazarus is Jesus' friend, v. 11. — V. 4: "Not unto death"; Jesus does not say that Lazarus will not die, but only that the final result and outcome of his sickness is not death. "For the glory of God" expresses the purpose of Lazarus' illness, viz., to make manifest among men God's power and to lead many to believe in Christ, the Savior Vv. 6-7: Jesus and His disciples were in Perea, east of Jordan, whither Jesus had gone to escape from the Jews, 10:39 ff. — The meaning of v. 9 is that while Jesus' day as appointed to Him by the Father lasted, He must continue to work, and no one could hurt or hinder Him. — V. 11: The Christian way of looking at death. Luther: "To speak of sleeping is to indicate secretly the resurrection from the dead, since they who sleep have the hope of rising again." — V. 15: Emphasis on "for your sake." Why? "That ye may believe." The sorrows at Bethany are intended for the spiritual welfare of Jesus' disciples. — V. 16: "With Him" refers to Jesus.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — The text does not address itself to sick people in general, but only to those sick people whom Jesus loves, and especially to Christian sufferers whose sickness is unto death.

*Preaching Emphases.* — We are still in Eastertide. The great truths of Easter impress upon us the lesson of Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 15:53-57, et al. Therefore, Jubilate.

*Illustrations.* — Luther's seal. The Christian walks among roses even when he walks under the cross.

*Problem and Goal.* — Although sickness and death come to all

men, yet very often the Christian is perplexed when suffering and sorrow strikes him. He is disturbed by the thought that though he is a friend of Jesus, yet he must lie sick, grow helpless, and die, as if Jesus had forgotten. The goal must be to develop in our hearers the Christian view of sickness and death, so that they will bear their trials with fortitude, yea, even rejoice, although afflicted.

*Outline:*

WHEN SICKNESS ENTERS OUR HOME

- I. We go to the Lord in prayer and patiently await His help.
- II. We firmly believe that our illness is for God's glory and for our own welfare.
- III. Even if the sickness is unto death, we sorrow not as they who have no hope, but rejoice in the knowledge of the Resurrection.

WALTER A. BAEPPLER

## BRIEF STUDIES

### A NEW GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT \*

Students of the New Testament in the English-speaking world have long been conscious of the need for a new Greek-English dictionary of the New Testament. J. H. Thayer's lexicon, published in 1886, and in a corrected edition in 1889, was a monumental work in its day, but much of it has now been suspended.

About 1935 an attempt was made to secure permission to translate Walter Bauer's excellent *Woerterbuch* in England, but nothing came of it. Several years later, the University of Chicago Press became interested in the production of a dictionary of New Testament Greek, but progress was slow. After the end of World War II interest was revived.

In the meantime, independently of the Press or any other agency, the Lutheran Academy for Scholarship of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod decided that the best service it could render to Biblical scholarship was to encourage the preparation of a translation of Bauer's third edition of 1937. The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod made funds available for this purpose. Upon learning of the plans of the University of Chicago Press, the Church began negotiations which ended November 30, 1949, with the signing of a contract between the Press and the Church for the production of a new Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament within a period estimated at about four years.

The plan is no longer simply to make a translation of Bauer's lexicon, but to use it as a base and to introduce whatever changes seem to be desirable in form and content, and to make whatever additions are necessary. Permission for such use of Bauer's dictionary was gained by the University of Chicago Press in 1947.

It is perhaps not generally known in this country that Professor Bauer is now working on a fourth revised and augmented edition of his dictionary. He retired from his position at Goettingen at the end of 1945 because of a chronic infection of the iris of the eye, brought on by malnutrition. Although it is still troublesome, this condition has

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\* This paper was prepared and read by Professor F. W. Gingrich at the meeting of The Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis at the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio, December 30, 1949. We are grateful to Professor Gingrich for granting us permission to publish it.—ED. COM.

improved enough to permit him to work at least part of the time. Despite the many frustrations and delays to which he has been subjected, he has brought the book nearly to completion. At the present time he has read and corrected more than half the final page proof, and the first fascicle, which will include about one third of the work, is expected to come off the press very soon. In a letter dated December 11, Frau Bauer informed me that the last of many obstacles had been overcome when the paper was finally delivered to the printer in Leipzig. These achievements are the more remarkable when we realize that Dr. Bauer was 72 years old last August 8.

The changes and additions made by Dr. Bauer to this edition are the fruit of ten years' systematic reading of Greek authors from the fourth century B. C. to Byzantine times, which he carried on between 1937 and 1947. It is this fourth edition upon which the forthcoming Greek-English lexicon will be based.

The direction of the new project is in the hands of Dr. William Arndt, professor of New Testament at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., who has been relieved of half his teaching load to work on it at St. Louis. The present writer is working on it full time at the University of Chicago Press, having been granted a leave of absence for the purpose from Albright College. In editing the lexicon we will have the advice of Dr. M. M. Mathews, head of the dictionary department of the University of Chicago Press, who is an expert on lexicographic procedure. At the present time we are engaged in examining current literature for treatments of New Testament Greek words.

The editors and all others connected with the making of this lexicon are anxious that it should be truly representative of the best scholarship in the English-speaking world on the subject. To this end they invite suggestions as to the form and content of it. Dr. Arndt may be addressed at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis 5, Mo., and the writer at The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 37, Ill. Let me present briefly a number of questions which might profitably be considered.

First, as to form. Should we follow Bauer in his frequent use of abbreviations? Would it be possible to relegate certain things in the treatment of a word to smaller type? Would it be more convenient for the reader if each new category were brought back to the left-hand margin of the column? Would it be well to let each entry word "overhang," that is, project a space or two beyond the left-hand margin? Could improvements be made in the order in which the meanings are arranged? Does anyone feel that Bauer gives too many references to contemporary treatments of the word in question? Would it be well

to indicate the meaning of a word in classical Greek when it differs significantly from the Koine meaning?

On the content of the dictionary, the editors would appreciate a statement from interested persons concerning important treatments of New Testament words, and their judgment as to the validity which they may possess. Results of the work of seminar courses would be appreciated.

The following brief list of items may suggest some possible questions. There was a tremendous amount of work done on the word ἀγάπη, as revealed in H. Riesenfeld's *Etude Bibliographique Sur la Notion Biblique d' ΑΓΑΠΗ*, 1941. Which do you consider the most significant trends in the study of this word? Prof. Albert Debrunner has suggested that ἀτ' ἄρτι in Rev. 14:13 should really be ἀπαρτί, a closely related form, which means "certainly, exactly." If he is right, and I think he is, we shall have to make a new entry in the New Testament vocabulary. (*Coniectanea NT XI*, 1947, 45—49.) Does ἀπλῶς in James 1:5 mean "simply" or "liberally"? Riesenfeld (*Coniectanea NT*, 1944) points out that when the word is combined with πᾶς, it means "without exception" and then "without reserve."

Do you agree with Dr. Wikgren in the 1942 JBL that ἀρχή means "essentials" or "elements" in the title to Mark's Gospel? Can you add anything important to the discussion whether δικαιούω means "to make just" or "to declare just"? Is H. Sahlin right in saying in "Zwei Lukasstellen" (1945) that ἔκαστος in Luke 6:44 means "both" rather than "every"? This meaning is not found in Bauer's third edition.

Who can tell us just where Emmaus was? Does ἐντὸς ἡμῶν in Luke 17:21 mean "inter vos" or "intra vos"? Just what is the symbolic meaning of the sounding brass and of the mirror in 1 Corinthians 13? Which of the many possible translations of παράκλητος is best? Is the παρθένος of 1 Cor. 7:38 the daughter or the fiancee of the man involved? Just how many sanhedrins were there, and what were they like? When does συνείδησις mean "conscience," and when simply "consciousness"? These are a few of the many which come to mind. We shall appreciate any word which you may have concerning them.

Chicago, Ill.

F. W. GINGRICH

#### "THOU ART MAD"

A college roommate and I once discovered, rather to our surprise, that Webster's Dictionary makes very good continuous reading of a sort, and we spent a good many odd moments, profitably I believe, at that strange sport. It was renewal of youth, therefore, to discover that the

solid, the reliable, the indispensable, the scholarly Kittel (*Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament*) could afford a kindred pleasure; he makes excellent browsing. It all began with the fourth volume, which opened at the unpromising word *μαίνομαι*. The survey of the classical material, with which the article opens, was a return to my salad days with Homer and Sophocles, a little nostalgic anthology of half-forgotten Greek, as fresh and dewy as the day I first met it in classroom or solitary study. It bore some theological fruit, too; the citations from the *Bacchae* of Euripides brought into view the idea which is the dominant one of the article: belief and unbelief confront each other with "Thou art mad!" The same idea recurs in some of the Septuagint material; the martyr's devotion of Eleazar and his sons is madness in the eyes of Antiochus Epiphanes. In the New Testament itself the word occurs but five times. But all four of the contexts in which it occurs are significant and characteristic. In the Gospel of St. John 10:19 ff. those Jews who cannot understand Jesus and will not admit His claim and His authority have but one reason for their contumacy: "He hath a devil and is mad." For unbelief, the unheard-of, the unparalleled, is madness. In Acts 12:15 the message of the maid Rhoda that Peter is standing at the door is greeted with, "Thou art mad." The incredible miracle of God is madness. In Acts 26 the impassioned proclamation of St. Paul all but casts its spell upon the Roman procurator also; he shakes off the spell with "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." The "words of truth and soberness" are, to unbelief, the fruit of madness. And the Spirit-inspired speaking with tongues of the Corinthian church — if the cool rationalism of unbelief confronts it, "will they not say that ye are mad?" To unbelief the redemptive action of God in any of its aspects looks like madness.

A little word like *μαίνομαι* may open up long vistas. It is perhaps not necessary to draw an explicit moral; the fruit is there for the plucking. From within, to the eyes of faith, the length and breadth and height and depth of the temple of God have a sweetly reasonable symmetry. But from without, to the eyes of unbelief, the building looks all askew, built on non-existent foundations and compounded of weakness and delusion. Apologetics has severe limitations. The Church must remember that what it has and what it says is madness, that being possessed of God has been from of old viewed with wary suspicion in the cool light of day. The Gospel is foolishness, a divine foolishness, which is wiser than the wisdom of men; but we must let God prove its

wisdom to men. We can only preach it, in season and out, in the teeth of the undying refrain, "Thou art mad."

But it is the "Thou art mad" of Festus that lingers particularly in our mind; for the Order of Festus, whose watchword is "Much learning doth make thee mad," has flourishing chapters within the Church, is represented at most conferences and at all seminaries by well-intentioned "practical" men and "practical-minded" students who in their short zeal for quick results do not see the danger of impoverishment and, ultimately, of perversion that threatens all severely "practical" theology. We shall do well to remind ourselves often that "practical" is derived from the Greek that loyal Festians are inclined to belittle, from a verb, πράττω, signifying "to do"; that the only force that *does* in the Church is the Word of God, the Gospel. And then we shall do well to recall the long wisdom of that most practical man, Martin Luther, who saith thus:

Denn das koennen wir nicht leugnen, dasz, wiewohl das Evangelium durch den Heiligen Geist ist gekommen und taeglich kommt, so ist's doch durch Mittel der Sprachen gekommen, und hat auch dadurch zugenommen, *musz auch dadurch behalten werden*. . . . So lieb nun also uns das Evangelium ist, so hart lasset uns ueber den Sprachen halten. . . . Und lasset uns das gesagt sein, dasz wir das Evangelium nicht wohl werden erhalten ohne die Sprachen. Die Sprachen sind die Scheide, darin dies Messer des Geistes steckt; sie sind der Schrein, darin man dies Kleinod traegt; sie sind das Gefaesz, darin man diesen Trank fasset; sie sind die Kemnot, darin diese Speise liegt; und, wie das Evangelium selbst zeigt, sie sind die Koerbe, darin man dies Brod und Fische und Brocken behaelt. Ja, so wir's versehen, dasz wir, da Gott vor sei, die Sprachen fahren lassen, so werden wir nicht allein das Evangelium verlieren, sondern wird auch endlich dahin gerathen, dasz wir weder lateinisch noch deutsch recht reden oder schreiben koennen. . . . Darum ist's gewisz, *wo nicht die Sprachen bleiben, da musz zuletzt das Evangelium untergehen*.

The Order of Festus is an ancient and a sensible, though hardly an honorable, order. To American Lutheranism, despite its sound theological heritage, it has a very special appeal—we are practical men and we have democracy's suspicion of the expert. One senses that the Missouri Synod, too, is beginning to be enthralled by it. But if we allow ourselves to be enrolled in it, our zeal for doing, for the practical, will, ultimately, leave the Church's real work undone and prove our undoing. As Christians, we are mad by definition; let us be mad in the grand manner, thoroughly, painstakingly, polyglottally mad. St. Paul, the mad, being dead, yet speaketh; Festus owes his little shred of immortality to the fact that he called St. Paul mad.

M. H. FRANZMANN

### THE COMMUNION ISSUE IN EKD

The *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, published at Munich and edited by Dr. Ernst Kinder, is the official organ of the Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD). In its number of November 15 it contained an article on "The Issue of Altar Fellowship in the EKD," by Walter Zimmermann, who writes under instructions from the Board of Directors of the VELKD in reply to certain proposals touching the question of altar fellowship in the EKD. The more immediate occasion was a letter, directed to the official delegates of EKD by Pastor v. d. Gablentz, in which the salient passage read: "The dissensions among the Confessions and the organized groups can only disappear when complete altar fellowship is established and, above all, when it is practiced by the convention itself"—and it is proposed that a joint Communion service be held at the opening of the next convention of EKD (the "Confessions" referred to are, of course, the Lutheran, the Reformed, and the Union Church, federated since the summer of 1948 in the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* — EKD). The reply made by Pastor Zimmermann announces a definitely negative stand of the Lutheran Church of Germany regarding the establishment of altar fellowship. Zimmermann asks: "At a time such as this, when there is certainly no lack of explosives in EKD, is it advisable to make an issue of this matter, especially since some of us are only with some self-control viewing conditions in EKD, especially since there is a little understanding of our conscientious scruples about this matter?" Next Rev. Zimmermann addresses himself to the notion that existing tensions might disappear through the establishment of altar fellowship. "This," is his comment, "is mistaking cause and effect. These tensions are the very reason why there is no room for altar fellowship. If two people differ in the fundamental concepts of married life, it will hardly make sense to tell them to enter into matrimony as a solution of their problems. Even so urging altar fellowship may very soon end in a *divorce*." Continuing his argument, Rev. Zimmermann points out that confessional differences during the epoch of liberalism—which the author evidently views as a dead issue — have been regarded as pointless or as theological quarrels. But, he says, we have, since the new insights gained more recently and since the "shackles of state-churchism have dropped away, become more serious and even excited about confessional questions today than ever since the days of the Reformation. We have learned, for one thing, that the Confessions have a decisive meaning in the question of Holy Communion. It is also an error to assume that only the question of altar fellowship still

separates the churches of Germany." Then, as regards the present situation, Rev. Zimmermann reminds his readers that "what is demanded by love in the hour of necessity must not be made a principle for normal practice. It was the principle of charity that was brought into play for the admission of refugees to our altars, and it must not be argued that by making this concession we have sacrificed our position that the differences in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper are indeed divisive of fellowship." There is a final warning not to try to maneuver the Lutherans into a unionistic position also in view of the "high explosives" in EKD, in view of which Zimmermann earnestly pleads that no effort be made in the direction of a joint Communion service when EKD next meets in synodical convention.

When the Lutherans, Reformed, and Union Church (the latter an insignificant minority party) met in Eisenach in 1948 for the organization of the Federation of Protestant forces, there were also voices in the Lutheran Church which urged the formation of a Church and not of a federation only and for this reason had in the original proposals a paragraph establishing altar fellowship between Reformed and Lutherans. This matter was debated for two days, and the paragraph finally adopted, while not establishing altar fellowship, recognized the difficulties of pastoral ministration caused by the invasion of millions of refugees from the East settling down in the Lutheran parishes of Western Germany. Dr. Eugene Gerstenmaier, home on business in Stuttgart during the sessions, informed us regarding the progress of the debate and gave as an instance the presence of refugees from the Silesian Union Church, now temporarily settled in a parish of the Bavarian State Church, which is Lutheran. How is a pastor to handle such cases? At a session in Bad Boll, June 17, 1949, Dr. Ernst Kinder, discussing German church affairs, also mentioned this problem of admission to the Lord's Table and altar fellowship. "There is no altar fellowship in principle and effective for the entire body of EKD. Wherever others are admitted to the Lord's Table, it is due to special difficulties in which the minister finds himself when dealing with individual souls. We are determined that such cases in casuistry do not become the normal procedure and that we gradually work our way out of this situation, a thing," he added, "in which we are even now making good progress."

The difficulties which are today besetting the German parish overwhelmed with thousands of refugees, without money, largely without household goods, and without employment, violently torn out of homes, jobs, and every social tie, completely disheartened and often in utter

despair, but seeking the consolations of the Gospel, create for the conscientious pastor difficulties not altogether unlike those for which our own pastors in the United States had to find a solution when a parish of two or three hundred souls found itself in the seething turmoil of a village of a few thousand mushrooming into a city of fifty thousand within a few months through the growth of war industries, with hundreds, and sometimes thousands of Lutherans moving into such parishes, yet knowing that their sojourn would last but a year or two until the war would be over. We do not find that the distinction made in our welfare work ("city mission") from its beginning, of (temporary, provisional, or emergency) *admission* to the Lord's Table, and *communicant membership* in the church, or the manner in which our pastors in defense areas or chaplains in Army and Navy met similar situations, has led to a decay of soundly Lutheran practice. No one is able to predict the outcome of this issue in the Lutheran Church of Germany. When in 1948 the Missouri Synod commissioners to Bad Boll expressed their misgivings regarding the formation of EKD and pointed out particularly the danger of an *Abendmahlszulassung* developing into an *Abendmahlsgemeinschaft*, they had in view the strongly unionistic trend of the Reformed and *Unionskirchen* element, also of not so small a contingent of weak Lutherans, who would seek to change an emergency status into something permanent and official, the "open Communion" policy which we know so well in America. It is clear that so far as the guiding councils of the VELKD are concerned, they are willing to be held responsible for a breakup of EKD if the price for union is to be paid by yielding the confessional principle.—The article by Pastor Zimmermann has since been mailed in separate reprint to the Lutheran clergy of Germany.

TH. GRAEBNER

#### THE WITNESSES OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

In listing the witnesses of the risen Christ in 1 Cor. 15:5 ff. St. Paul makes no reference to the several women who played such a prominent role on Easter Day. This does indeed seem rather strange. However, it must be kept in mind that St. Paul in this chapter is determined to present Christ's resurrection not only as an object of faith, but primarily as an absolutely and indisputably established fact. According to Jewish law, women were not admitted as material witnesses in a judicial process, and the omission of the women as witnesses to Christ's resurrection is therefore fully in accord with Paul's intention in this chapter, namely, to set forth that any human court must recognize the evidence for the Resurrection as an undeniable historical event. F. E. M.

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### RE LUTHERAN UNITY

The *Lutheran Standard* (December 31, 1949) presents an over-all picture of the status of Lutheran unity as it existed at the close of 1949. In a final paragraph the author singles out the following three 1949 developments in the field of Lutheran unity negotiations:

1. Between our Church (American Lutheran Church) and the Missouri Synod there is now the definite prospect of agreement on a "common confession" that, if consummated, should lead to pulpit and altar fellowship.

2. There is now a definite plan, which seems likely to materialize, for federating our American Lutheran Church with the other seven church bodies in the National Lutheran Council. The 1950 conventions of these bodies are also to express themselves on their willingness to work toward an organic merger of these bodies.

3. Negotiations between the delegations of our own Church and those of the E. L. C. and U. E. L. C. have resulted in very definite proposals that look toward the organic merging of these bodies. If all goes well—and at this time the prospects of things going well seem bright—the decision to merge could be made by the three bodies in 1952, and the actual merger could be effected as early as 1954.

The most recent development which took place regarding Lutheran unity are the proposals arrived at in Chicago on January 6 by the Committee of Thirty-Four made up of representatives of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, the United Lutheran Church in America, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, the Finnish Suomi Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Danish Lutheran Church. This Committee voted unanimously to submit three questions to the eight church bodies listed above. Each body will be asked:

1. If it is willing at this time to approve in principle complete organic union with other participating bodies in the National Lutheran Council.

2. If it will join in creating a joint ways and means committee to formulate a plan to draw up a constitution for such a union.

3. If it approves in principle the transformation of the National Lutheran Council from a common agency to a federation.

Regarding the third question, Dr. P. O. Bersell, president of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, is quoted as having said: "If organic union is agreed on by the various bodies, it still would take several years to effect a merger. A federation could function in the interim period. However, if one or more bodies reject the merger proposal, the federation plan will be considered as an alternative."

From the above it appears that all national conventions of Lutheran church bodies scheduled for this year will give serious thought to the question of Lutheran unity. If ever there was a time when Lutherans throughout our country, regardless of their synodical affiliation, ought to pray the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ so to guide the thinking and actions of all those in key positions in the various Lutheran groups in our land that faithfulness to the Word and loyalty to the Confessions are made the basic consideration of further *rapprochements* between Lutheran groups — that time is now. May sound theological and Confessional considerations, rather than measures of momentary expediency, guide the thinking of those most responsible for the future of the Lutheran Church in America.

P. M. B.

#### THE SAD CASE OF ALCOHOLISM

UP reported on January 6 that our leading corporations are far from agreement as to either the cause or cure of alcoholism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York claiming that alcoholism is a disease and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company asserting with equal positiveness that alcoholism is not a disease. The latter's medical director, Dr. E. C. Bonnett, was quoted as having said: "If it is a disease, it's a self-inflicted one, and it can be cured only if the person afflicted recognizes his condition and wants to correct it." There was no disagreement, so the report continued, as to the seriousness of the problem. "About three persons out of every 100 employed drink enough to be considered alcoholics. It is estimated that the average alcoholic loses some 22 days each year from his job. This adds up to 28,000,000 workdays annually lost throughout all industry."

Whatever medical men, psychiatrists, social workers, and efficiency experts may say regarding the cause of alcoholism, Scripture makes it abundantly clear that God has no pleasure in the drunkenness of His children. In the class of those who "shall not inherit the Kingdom of God" we find listed not only thieves, covetous people, revilers, and extortioners, but also drunkards (1 Cor. 6:10). And God has some serious words to say also to those who entice others to drunkenness. He tells His people in Hab. 2:15: "Woe unto him that giveth his

neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also," a word that applies in our day to those who become partly responsible for juvenile delinquency because of the bad example they are giving through their own indulgence in hard liquors and because of their oftentimes deliberate efforts to make minors partners of their sin. In recent months we had occasion to hear about the results of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. But upon inquiry we were informed that many of those reported cured had come to a living consciousness of their sin through the power of God's Word and, propelled by the love of Christ, had made a new beginning of life. A drunkard must never be laughed at. He must be pitied. True. But this pity must be more than sentimental palaver. It must be a pity which flows out of one's love for the Savior, a pity which sees in the drunkard a reckless sinner but also a redeemed child of God whom the power of God residing in the Word can rescue from the slavery of drunkenness.

P. M. B.

#### MEETINGS IN CINCINNATI

At the meeting of The Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis held in Cincinnati, December 28 to 30, a number of outstanding papers were read on the discovery, age, and significance of the Old Testament scrolls which came to light only a few years ago. It became evident that the age of these scrolls is still in dispute. One Old Testament scholar tried to demonstrate that they may not be dated earlier than the sixth century after Christ. Said Professor O. R. Sellers of McCormick Theological Seminary, who had within the past year and a half explored caves in Palestine in which the scrolls were found, "I think there are more scrolls in existence."

Among papers on New Testament exegesis those by Professor J. R. Mantey (Northern Baptist Theological Seminary) on "Causal Uses of εἰς in the New Testament"; by Professor R. R. Brewer (James Millikin University) on "Revelation 4:6 and Translations Thereof"; and by Professor S. V. McCasland (University of Virginia) on "Abba, Father" were of particular value to New Testament students. Professor Merrill M. Parvis (University of Chicago), who had just returned from England, where he conferred with British New Testament scholars, said: "There are still hundreds of boxes of Oxyrhyncus materials at Queens College."

Among jottings taken in the meetings, I find a statement made by Professor F. V. Filson (McCormick Theological Seminary), who presided over the meetings: "Man *must* take into account divine purpose and action in his interpretation of history." On an after-dinner stroll

with a well-known professor of New Testament studies, with whom we were discussing Professor Nygren's commentary on Romans, this writer was informed: "Professor Nygren lectured on ἔρως and ἀγάπη four hours a week for eight years. It was the only course he taught in that period of time. Then he wrote his great work *Eros und Agape*. He lectured four hours a week for five years on Romans. That was the only course he taught in that period of time. Then he wrote his commentary."

Also in Cincinnati, on December 28, Rev. Clarence Peters, pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, St. Louis, and chairman of the Board for Young People's Work, read a paper titled "The Parochial School from the Lutheran Point of View" in the annual meeting of the American Association of Schools of Religious Education. The paper provoked much discussion, was favorably received, and is being distributed in scores of copies among those who are interested in Synod's system of parish education.

Cincinnati was, finally, the scene where there came into being a new organization henceforth known as The Evangelical Theological Society. The purpose of this organization is "to foster conservative Biblical scholarship by providing a medium for the oral exchange and written expression of thought and research in the general field of the theological disciplines as centered in the Scriptures." The Statement of Faith adopted by the society reads: "Membership in this Society shall include subscription to the following declaration: The Bible alone and the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God written, and therefore inerrant in the autographs." In one of the sessions Dr. Alexander Heidel of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago read a paper in which he harmonized the Biblical account of Sennacherib's campaign against Hezekiah with the inscription on the Taylor Prism (a bow to Dr. Heidel, who was recently promoted to the position of research associate with the rank of assistant professor). P. M. B.

#### THE DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION ONCE MORE

The *Lutheran Outlook* (January 1950) presents two controversial editorials on the inspiration of the Bible by its editor, Dr. J. A. Dell, in which he discusses and refutes a number of errors on this point. One is saddened by the denial of Biblical inspiration by Lutheran divines after so many Lutheran churches in our country have adopted clear and distinctive confessions affirming this important Scripture teaching. But one is gladdened also by the clear and able defense of the doctrine by Lutheran leaders, such as Dr. Dell and others. Two

salient points might be brought to the attention of our readers. Rejecting the error of a partial inspiration of the Bible, Dr. Dell writes: "But Rev. Neve [one of the correspondents] would probably say . . . that he has difficulty in believing that all the Bible is inspired. The Word of God is inspired — this he believes —, but how much of the Bible is the Word of God? Those who use this method of speaking do not seem to see that they thereby allow a principle of doubt, of subjectivity, to enter in which will in time destroy the whole doctrine of inspiration, and much more besides. For if some of the Bible is the Word of God, but not all of it, then it is up to us to determine what is Word of God and what is not. Men will have to determine that. In other words, we no longer have God telling us what we *should* believe, but we have men telling God what they *will* believe. Man has exalted himself and his authority above God and God's authority. In this new pride of reason some men will deny (and they have done so) the very basic truths of revelation, as that Christ died for our sins. Thus the Christian faith disintegrates and the Christian Bible degenerates into a collection, more or less valuable, of little moralisms. Then you have No Word [so in the original] of God any more. This is the point that the defendants of an inspired Bible see clearly. The Christian faith and the Bible hang together. . . . If the Bible is not an authoritative source of doctrine, then the doctrines which are the foundation of the Christian faith will not stand, and the Christian Church will not stand." Against such as call Verbal Inspiration a theory, Dr. Dell writes: "That is the *Doctrine* [thus the original] of inspiration. It is no theory of man. It is the doctrine of God's Word. . . . The Holy Spirit has seen fit to reveal in His written Word the fact of the inspiration of the written Word. I wish therefore that men who write on the subject of inspiration would stop using the phrase 'the theory of verbal inspiration.' Either the inspiration of the written Word — the doctrine that God supplied 'content and *fitting form*' [thus in the original] is a fact or it is not a fact. If it is a fact, it is not a theory. If it is not a fact, then we have no authority, no religion, no Christ, no salvation, no hope — and no theories." This is indeed well stated. In his letter to Dr. Dell, Rev. A. V. Neve refers to the articles on inspiration written by Dr. J. Tanner in the *Lutheran Herald* between September 27 and October 25, 1949. He emphasizes especially five points which, according to Dr. Tanner, inspiration must include. We read: "The inspiration of the Bible must include . . . 5. That the Holy Spirit enabled each author to choose from his own vocabulary the words that adequately expressed what God had given

him to say. And so the Bible is verbally inspired." We are here not concerned with Rev. Neve's arguments against the five points, but we are vitally interested in the paramount premise that those who affirm Biblical inspiration, both verbal and plenary, should speak clearly on the doctrine. We personally read the first three articles of Dr. Tanner with great joy and commented on them favorably (cf. CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, December, 1949, p. 937 f.), though putting the best construction on some of the expressions and statements that did not seem clear to us, in view of the many fine essentials which they contained. In the final article, however, the doctrine of verbal and plenary inspiration is not adequately presented, especially not in the five points to which Rev. Neve refers. If what is said in the fifth point is all that there is to inspiration, then, in the last analysis, there was no inspiration at all, but merely divine guidance, and Scripture is not a divine book, but essentially a human book. In a doctrine so weighty and controverted no room must be left for doubt. Let those who defend Verbal Inspiration speak as clearly and distinctly as do the special Lutheran Confessions on inspiration which in recent years were adopted by Lutheran synods. Disregarding the *Brief Statement* of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, we quote, for example, the *Doctrinal Affirmation* (1944), which says: "They [the Scriptures] are the Word of God, because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21. . . . By virtue of inspiration, i.e., the unique operation of the Holy Spirit, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21, by which He supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word, 1 Cor. 2:12-13, the separate books constitute an organic whole, are without contradiction and error, John 10:35, and are rightly called the Word of God." In a similar way the *Pittsburgh Agreement* (1940) says: "By virtue of a unique operation of the Holy Ghost (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21), by which He supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word (2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:15), the separate books of the Bible . . . constitute a complete, errorless, unbreakable whole, of which Christ is the Center (John 10:35). They are rightly called the Word of God." The *Baltimore Declaration* of the United Lutheran Church (1938) says: "We believe that the whole body of the Scriptures is inspired by God. . . . We accept the inspiration of the Scriptures as a fact of which our faith in God, through Christ, assures us, and this assurance is supported by words of Scripture in which the fact of inspiration is asserted or implied (1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21)." The *Intersynodical (Chicago) Theses* (1928) say: "They [the Holy Scriptures] are the

Word of God, because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only that which the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21." Again: "Over against modern theology we maintain, now as formerly, the doctrine of verbal inspiration, 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16). We believe and confess that Scripture not only contains God's Word, but is God's Word, and hence no errors or contradictions of any sort are found therein." Not all statements in these doctrinal declarations are altogether satisfactory, but all of them clearly state what is meant by Biblical inspiration: the Holy Spirit supplied content and *fitting word*. Since these declarations have been officially adopted, we wonder why the doctrine of Biblical inspiration should still be in controversy. Why deny Verbal and Plenary Inspiration when Scripture teaches it so clearly?

J. T. MUELLER

#### A PLEA FOR DOGMATICS

Dr. Carl C. Rasmussen, professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa., reports in the *Lutheran* (January 11) how he spent his leave of absence from September till Thanksgiving, 1949. He visited a dozen schools of theology, such as Princeton, McCormick, Seabury-Western, Hartford, Yale, the University of Chicago, and others. "The visitor to our theological schools sees many signs of the present 'evangelical revival.' . . . A Lutheran feels that Christian seminaries have come back where they belong, where they stand again on the great Christian beliefs of the centuries."

Having reviewed his contacts with members of the Federated Faculties of the University of Chicago, Dr. Rasmussen notes: "It is interesting, and not strange, that its catalog offers no courses in systematic theology or dogmatics. The place of that venerable field is taken by courses in 'Constructive Theology.' That means that the student, supplied with the learning which the school helps him to acquire, is to 'construct' his own theology to fit circumstances of the world as it is now. I soon found that at least some of the students felt the outcome was rather that they were sent out with a homemade confusion instead of a theology. 'I have been in this course in constructive theology for a half term,' said one graduate student, 'but there is no theology yet. We have only been watching the shifting scenes from Locke, Berkeley and Hume, down to twentieth century modernism. Give me some dogmatics!'"

Systematic theology, with a strong emphasis on dogmatics, has always occupied an honorable niche in the curriculum of Lutheran theological seminaries. Apart from the practical consideration that

dogmatics provides the student with a frame of reference, a structural pattern, the *norma normata* of Biblical truth which he will later preach, teach, and apply in whatever situation he finds himself, Lutheranism as a Church is under deep obligation to the systematically compiled Scriptural teachings as these are expressed in the Lutheran Confessions. There are, of course, extreme views regarding the place of systematic theology, in particular of dogmatics, in a theological curriculum. The story is told that when students at one time helped Dr. Adolf Harnack move his library to other quarters in Berlin, one of them asked him, "Where do you wish us to place your books dealing with dogmatics?" Dr. Harnack is reported to have replied, "Place them among the belles-lettres." That attitude, usually expressed in less euphemistic language, is the attitude which prevails in many inter-denominational theological schools in the country. But the other extreme is equally dangerous. It proceeds on the assumption that dogmatics is the final arbiter for the settling of all theological disputes. Opposing this extreme, the informed Lutheran theologian replies:

"We believe, teach, and confess that the sole truth and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone. . . . Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them, and should not be received otherwise or further than as witnesses, which are to show in what manner after the time of the apostles, and at what places, this pure doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved." (Formula of Concord, *Triglot*, p. 777.)

Future Lutheran theologians will need to know systematic theology, especially the Lutheran Confessions and Lutheran dogmatics. But they will also bear in mind that "Holy Scriptures alone remain the only judge, rule, and standard, according to which, as the only test-stone, all dogmas shall and must be discerned and judged, as to whether they are good or evil, right or wrong" (Formula of Concord, *Triglot*, p. 779). This means, in effect, that the study of the sacred writings of the Old and the New Testament themselves must ever remain the central core of the curriculum of a Lutheran theological seminary.

P. M. B.

#### THE BIBLE IN MODERN POETRY

*Religion in Life* (Winter number) contains an article in which the author, Professor Charles S. Braden of Northwestern University, submits his findings on the use of the Bible in contemporary poetry.

He limits himself to the following writers: W. H. Auden, Robinson Jeffers, Edna St. Vincent Millay, E. A. Robinson, and Carl Sandburg, though he has, of course, investigated the poetry of many others. In a final chapter, Professor Braden concludes: "Our leading contemporary poets seem not to make such extensive use of the Bible as those of an earlier day. If they do not, the question may well be asked: Why? Is it because they themselves do not know the Bible? This may well be the case, though with the exception of one of those studied, MacLeish, the references that occur are well enough scattered through the Bible to lead one to believe that the writers at least have some familiarity with the Book, possibly much more than the limited use of it might lead one to think. Could it be that they think their readers would, because of a lack of biblical background, not understand what they were saying if they used the language of Scripture? If they did — though that is probably not the reason — they might have been justified, for actually the degree of biblical illiteracy among people of middle age or younger is tragic, due probably to the fact that they received their religious education during the period in which the life-situation emphasis as over against the Bible-centered emphasis in that field was most in vogue."

It is obviously unfair, on the basis of this one study, to draw any final conclusions. Yet, when the findings of Professor Braden are placed alongside studies made in recent years to determine the general status of religious and Bible knowledge in our country, they confirm the conclusions of these studies. It would be rash, indeed, to blame the sad illiteracy in Bible knowledge prevailing in our country wholly on the life-situation-emphasis curriculum, widely in vogue in the last decades. There may well be other reasons. But it is noteworthy that the present generation is charged not only with illiteracy in Bible knowledge, but also with illiteracy in other areas, particularly in literature and acceptable language habits. The problem is too complicated to be discussed at this point. Yet it may not be said too often that the Church fails in its duty if in whatever program of religious education it sponsors, it sacrifices Bible-emphasis to life-emphasis. If one of the two alternatives must suffer, it must be the latter. Fortunately, however, the truths of the Bible are so timely and relevant in every generation that the imaginative and sympathetic teacher of the Bible does not find it difficult to make these truths eminently existential in the life and thought of those whom it is his privilege to teach.

P. M. B.

## ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

The Lutheran church bodies of the United States sent 152 missionaries to foreign fields in 1949. The United Lutheran Church in America sent 40; The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 37; the Augustana Lutheran Church, 22; the Evangelical Lutheran Church, 14; the American Lutheran Church, 12; the World Mission Prayer League, eight; the Sudan Mission, seven; the Lutheran Brethren, six; the Lutheran Free Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, each three. Of these missionaries 67 went to Africa, six to Argentina, seven to Bolivia, two to Brazil, two to British Guiana, three to China, one to Colombia, one to Cuba, two to Guatemala, one to Honduras, 20 to India, 18 to Japan, nine to Madagascar, 10 to New Guinea, and three to the Philippines.

Negro Baptists in Mississippi have introduced a traveling "theological seminary" in an effort to lift the educational level of their ministers. The seminary travels from place to place, giving the clergymen an opportunity to study at night. The central office of the school, in operation seven years, is located in Jackson. In that period the seminary has reached 567 ministers through regular classes. A total of 5,343 have been given short-term instruction in "Bible institutes," and 6,563 boys and girls have received religious instruction in special summertime schools sponsored by the seminary.

Four bills designed to cut the divorce rate in Massachusetts have been filed in the House of Representatives which (1) give exclusive jurisdiction in divorce cases to probate courts; (2) establish boards of conciliation in the courts as well as "alimony trustees" to supervise payments made after divorce or separation; (3) provide for a "60-day cooling off period" through requirement of a 60-day notice to the court of intention to file a libel for divorce; (4) create a recess commission to investigate the State's marriage and divorce laws.

Protestant and Greek Orthodox delegates attending the Conference of European Culture in Lausanne, Switzerland, joined in special worship services at the Protestant cathedral of Lausanne. The officiating clergymen were Bishop Stephen C. Neill, assistant to the Archbishop of Canterbury; Dr. Nils Ehrenstrom of the Swedish Lutheran Church, and Greek Orthodox Archimandrite Constantin Valiadis. The sermon was preached by Pastor Alphonse Koechlin, president of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches.

A total of \$1,001,574,371 has been given this year by the members

of fifty-two Protestant denominations for local church expenses and benevolences. It was the first time since the United Stewardship Council has been publishing figures on contributions to churches that the total has exceeded the billion-dollar mark. The 1949 total represents an increase of \$138,603,682 — or 13.6 per cent — over 1948. Dr. Harry S. Myers, Council secretary, stressed that the above figure does not include contributions by some two hundred smaller Protestant denominations. Some of these, he said, make liberal contributions, and their total would be at least fifty million dollars. The statistics also do not include millions of dollars contributed to church-related colleges, theological seminaries, church hospitals, and church homes. In addition, Mr. Myers said, there are contributions made by individuals to city and State councils of churches ,and to national councils of churches, which total between \$800,000 and \$1,000,000.

Representatives of the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish faiths consecrated a grave site near Munich containing the remains of about 20,000 victims of the Dachau concentration camp. Specially constructed altars of the three faiths erected at the sides of the cemetery were lighted during the ceremony. Overhead was an arch bearing the words "We have not forgotten you." Presiding Bishop Hans Meiser of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany officiated at the Protestant service; Suffragan Bishop Johannes Neuhaeusler of Munich, himself a former Dachau inmate, at the Catholic service; and Chief Rabbi Aaron Ohrenstein of Bavaria conducted the Jewish rites.

Striking out against those "who would keep the anti-Catholic pots boiling for reasons of politics or prejudice," Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston denounced the activities of organizations "like the Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State" as a "refined form of the Ku Klux Klan." The Archbishop warned Catholics to be vigilant concerning the education question and spoke of a "cooler, calculated campaign" whose "ultimate purpose is to close all parochial schools." He also cautioned Catholics against permitting themselves to be "dazzled" by slogans about separation of Church and State, preservation of the public school, and similar "glittering generalities."

Dutch Catholics are sponsoring a protest to be submitted to the United Nations against religious persecution in Soviet Russia and its satellite countries and against the "violation of divine and human rights" in those nations. The protest action is also designed "to unite all Christians in continuous and ardent prayer in order to obtain the

liberation of eastern Europe from the grip of Communist terror." Catholics signing the protest pledge themselves to fast and abstain on Saturdays and observe the first Saturday of every month in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Scholars who attended the sessions of the National Association of Biblical Instructors at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati examined a rare copy of the Pentateuch printed in Bologna, Italy, in 1482. The volume was given to the college by Louis Rabinowitz, New York manufacturer and art collector. Dr. Nelson Glueck, president of the college, said that only five copies of the book, printed on vellum, are believed to be in existence. The others are in J. Pierpont Morgan Library, Library of Congress, New York Public Library, and Jewish Theological Library, New York City.

Wives of more than a score of student seminarians at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, are attending a study course to learn how they can best help their husbands in the ministry. Professor Edward C. Fendt, director of the course, will teach the wives "Christian Doctrine and Ethics." Dr. Harold L. Yochum, president of Capital University, will instruct them in "Church Organization and Societies." Professor G. H. Doermann will conduct a course in effective Sunday school teaching. Forty-five of the 135 seminary students are married.

A record membership of 8,792,569 for the Methodist Church during 1949 and an all-time high in annual contributions, amounting to \$229,297,111 were reported by the Rev. Albert C. Hoover, director of the Statistical Office. The figures cover 106 annual conferences of the Methodist Church and missions in the United States and its possessions. They indicate a net membership increase of 141,507 over 1948. Church school membership increased 152,153 during the year and now stands at 5,807,959. This includes a Sunday school enrollment of 5,113,704, with an average attendance of 2,871,061.

Per-capita giving in the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern) in 1949 was \$52.64 — the largest figure of any Protestant denomination having a membership of 250,000 or more. The largest per-capita giving of any denomination affiliated with the United Stewardship Council regardless of size was \$148.21, received by the Free Methodist Church. This represents a contribution of \$2.85 a week per member.

ALEX. WM. C. GUEBERT

## BOOK REVIEW

*All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.*

**COMMENTARY ON ROMANS.** By Anders Nygren, Bishop of Lund, Sweden.  
Translated by Carl C. Rasmussen. Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia.  
457 pages, 6×9. \$5.00.

All who in 1948 heard the splendid addresses of Professor (now Bishop) Nygren of Lund, Sweden, will rejoice to be informed that a commentary on Romans has emanated from his study. While his field of special endeavor as university professor was Systematic Theology, he evidently did not neglect the careful and continuous study of the New Testament. One recalls that when his famous contemporary Karl Barth, likewise a dogmatician, entered the theological arena after World War I, it was with a commentary on Romans. Often the remark has been made that Barth's commentary tells us much about Barth's views, but little about those of St. Paul. We are happy to say that no similar charge can be made against the book of Bishop Nygren.

What strikes the reader most of all when opening the book, aside from its very engaging external features, such as clear type and good paper, is the simplicity of the style which the learned author employs. Here there is no striving for effect, no heaping up of colorful, gripping epithets, no attempt to dazzle by recourse to what is unusual, but a very straightforward, direct discussion of the content of this vital document, the Epistle to the Romans. Bishop Nygren, like Professor Luthardt of Leipzig many years ago and, more recently, our own Dr. Pieper, furnishes striking proof that a person can be learned without writing an obscure, baffling style. That simplicity does not involve a discarding of dignified language and true charm of speech is likewise demonstrated here. The work of the translator, Professor Carl Rasmussen, has been very well done and entitles him to our deep gratitude.

The aim of the author was not to give us a detailed commentary, shedding light on every linguistic phenomenon, problem, or difficulty that the epistle presents. His plan rather was to get at the heart of the thought of Paul. As a result the pages are not profusely studded with Greek words and expressions; the scholarly artillery (that is, quotations from other commentators, old and new) is brought to the fore sparingly. In his aim to give a thorough discussion of the great ideas that Paul presents, Professor Nygren, generally speaking, has succeeded. The leading thoughts of the Epistle are examined, false views that have arisen concerning them are described and refuted, and the net result is a clearly etched drawing of

the Apostle's meaning. One consequence is that this commentary is a very readable book. It can be perused from beginning to end without mental discomfort. One is not troubled by paragraphs concerned with the minutiae of expository procedure, such as special remarks on ordinary conjunctions and prepositions and the comments of, let us say, Oecumenius and Theophylact. While occasionally such details unavoidably are submitted, one is carried forward by a gently flowing current of interesting discussion, the subject always being some significant thought of the Apostle.

Nygren presents a definite and clear outline of the Epistle, dividing it into four sections: 1. The righteousness of faith, 1:18—4:25; 2. He who through faith is righteous shall live, 5:1—8:39; 3. The righteousness of faith does not violate God's promise, 9:1—11:36; 4. The behavior of those who through faith are righteous, 12:1—15:13, followed by the conclusion, 15:14—16:27. The righteousness of God he conceives to be the theme of the Epistle. To list all the details of interpretation which elicited my approval, and besides gave me a spiritual thrill, would require too long a review. Mention of a few points must suffice: Righteousness of God is explained as righteousness coming from God; Pelagianism and synergism are rigorously brushed aside; man in justification is pictured as the recipient; all human merit is excluded; Luther's "*allein durch den Glauben*" is defended; ch. 7:14-25 is interpreted as speaking of Paul after his conversion; the doctrine of predestination is treated in a Scriptural and edifying manner; ch. 9:5 is interpreted as ascribing deity to Christ, etc. It is the voice of conservative Lutheranism which is here heard.

Several criticisms I shall submit briefly. Does Nygren explain clearly what is meant by the "righteousness of God"? He says many things about it which are fully in keeping with the Lutheran Confessions: This righteousness comes from without (p. 16); justification is not something which occurs within the soul (p. 18); the view is rejected that this righteousness is a state of ethical well-being (p. 19); Christ is the Righteousness of God (p. 29); faith is not a condition of justification (p. 69); the righteousness Paul speaks of is one which God has effected for us through His work in Christ (p. 74); it is an objective relationship proffered to us through Christ and into which we are received through faith in Him (p. 75); the essence of justification is the forgiveness of sins (p. 171). Many other quotations of like tenor can be brought. But there are some disconcerting sentences or expressions, too, leading one to believe that Nygren does not adhere simply to the teachings of our Confessions: The righteousness of God is a righteousness which He reveals to us and permits us to share (p. 75); the righteousness from God is not revealed just to give us knowledge of it, but that it may be shared with us and become ours (p. 149); by the grace of God man is included in God's own righteousness; just as wrath is an objective power which exerts its might for the destruction of man, so the righteousness of God is also an objective power which exerts its might for redemption and life (p. 152); "what

has happened through Christ is that we are now under the dominion of the righteousness of God. It is that which Paul means and nothing else when he says that we are justified through Christ" (p. 187). These statements are baffling. They make it practically impossible to hold that Nygren conceives of the righteousness of God as something that God bestows on the sinner, declaring him righteous, simply pardon, forgiveness, in spite of the sentence quoted above from p. 171. At any rate, in this area clarity is lacking.

Probably even more serious is the lack of an adequate portrayal of the role of Christ in the work of justification. One would expect a thorough discussion of this subject in the interpretation of ch. 3:21-31. Nygren says that the righteousness of God is revealed through Christ (p. 39). Is that all? we ask. "In Christ this righteousness has come to us, and he who through faith belongs to Him has it as his righteousness" (p. 76). This, too, is vague and indefinite. With full approval one reads that ch. 3:25 is interpreted as speaking of Christ as the "mercy seat" (p. 156). That, it will be recalled, was Luther's view. In unfolding the meaning of this metaphor, Nygren does not go beyond the view that Christ's work is a revelation of God. On p. 158 he comes as close as anywhere to a statement of the work that Christ performed for us: "The work of Christ is called redemption because by it we are delivered from bondage to the hostile powers. But since the same act of Christ delivers us from the wrath of God and gives us peace with Him, it can also be spoken of as reconciliation (cf. 5:1; 9 ff.)." Here as elsewhere it is affirmed that reconciliation is God's own work. The Biblical terms are used; their precise meaning is not explained. One does not learn whether Nygren believes Paul teaches the substitutionary atonement of Christ. Here, too, the reader is not given the insight he seeks. In reading the comments on ch. 1:17, where the Old Testament passage Hab. 2:4 is quoted, one wonders why Nygren has to conclude that Paul in addition to the native meaning of the Old Testament words finds a deeper sense in them, when scholars like B. Weiss do not charge Paul with departure from the original meaning of Habakkuk. In interpreting Rom. 11:26 Nygren holds that "all Israel" refers to the Jewish nation (that is, not merely to the spiritual Israel as described in ch. 9).

I hope that many readers will acquire this commentary, not because every statement in it is correct, but because it will help them in many ways to grow in their understanding and appreciation of Romans, the chief Epistle of the inspired Apostle Paul.

W. ARNDT

**THE REIGN OF GRACE.** From Its Rise to Its Consummation. By Abraham Booth. With an Introductory Essay by Thomas Chalmers, D. D. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1949.

Until his early twenties, Abraham Booth, 1740—1805, was a lay preacher of the General, or Freewill (Arminian), Baptists in England,

when he became an ardent defender of the Five Points of Calvinism, particularly the doctrine of the sovereignty of grace, and joined the Particular, or Calvinistic, Baptists. At the age of 28 years Booth published *The Reign of Grace*. The sections in this book dealing with the work of Christ (p. 261), justification as a forensic act (p. 113 ff.), sanctification, have a genuinely evangelical ring. Booth sets at naught all human co-operation and ascribes man's salvation entirely to God; he places the theocentric theology of Calvinism into sharp antithesis to the egocentric theology of Pelagianism and Arminianism. Nevertheless the central theme of Calvinism—the Calvinistic "sovereign grace"—permeates the entire book. Sovereign grace, however, ignores, at least relegates to the background, the Scriptural concept of grace as the favor of God for Christ's sake. According to Booth, God's sovereign act of election is the first link in the golden chain of our salvation (p. 53). The starting point of Booth's theology is "distinguishing grace," a sovereign act of God for a specific number of people whom He has chosen by His sovereign act. In reality, the election is *fait accompli* prior to God's decree concerning the work of Christ (p. 144). This doctrine of "distinguishing grace" is said to glorify God, since it ascribes to Him and to His sovereign majesty man's salvation, but in reality it leads either to despair or to human pride. This doctrine furthermore fails to observe the proper distinction between Law and Gospel, because it does not take seriously the holiness of God and therefore views God's grace not as pure grace in Christ, but actually as an arbitrary grace (p. 70), nor does it do justice to God's sovereignty, which when isolated from God's other attributes ignores the dogmatic axiom that God is the sum of His attributes (p. 91). For the adherents of historic Calvinism this is still a charming book, though first published almost 200 years ago.

F. E. MAYER

**THE SON OF GOD AMONG THE SONS OF MEN.** Studies in the Gospel according to John. By Everett F. Harrison, A.M., Th.D., Professor of New Testament, Fuller Theological Seminary. W. A. Wilde Company, Boston. 251 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . \$2.50.

Here we have a number of discussions based on the Fourth Gospel. The connecting link is that all of them treat of the contact of Jesus with some person mentioned in the Gospel. The people who are brought before us are John the Baptist, Andrew, Simon Peter, Nathanael, Nicodemus, woman of Samaria, impotent man, man born blind, Lazarus, Martha, Mary of Bethany, Judas, Pilate, Mary Magdalene, Thomas, John the Apostle. Dr. Harrison, before accepting a chair at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif., served as professor of New Testament at Dallas Seminary. One soon finds, as chapter after chapter is read, that the author writes simply and beautifully and that he has an excellent knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. His occasional references to the Greek are of a nature to bear out the statement of Dr. H. J. Ockenga in the Preface that

Dr. Harrison is a fine Greek scholar. Biographical preaching should not be engaged in often, but now and then a minister may well have recourse to it in his endeavor to bring effective messages to his congregation. In this volume excellent material is offered for this type of sermons. The author accepts the Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God and wishes to bow to their authority. My dissent was aroused by the comments on John 3:5 (p. 69), which do not do justice to this important passage. W. ARNDT

CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS. By Alan Richardson. Harper & Brothers, New York. 256 pages,  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ . \$3.00.

This new and also novel apologetic has been favorably received both in England and in America. John C. Bennett has hailed it as "the most satisfactory statement that has yet come out of the present confusion concerning faith, revelation, and reason." The conservative theologian can hardly accord it such high, unqualified praise. The author, formerly editor of the *Student Christian* and now Canon of Durham Cathedral, whose five previous works on apologetic theology have enjoyed great popularity, follows somewhat the line of thought projected by William Temple, although his leanings to neo-orthodoxy are more pronounced. Broadly speaking, he seeks to build up out of the confusion of Modernist negativism a more or less positive system of Christian belief. To him theology is essentially an empirical science and so capable of demonstration. He denies the divine inspiration of the Bible, but, nevertheless, holds that Scripture is authoritative, since it is the means by which the Holy Spirit imparts to men and assures men of divine truth. His methodology might be outlined as follows: He first defines apologetics with regard to its scope, object, and rightful place in theological science. He next shows that theology is an empirical science, though by no means an ideology, yet a historical religion both in its origin and in its promulgation. Then he defends the reality of divine revelation, in particular the Bible, as a special and unique revelation, proves that the arguments from miracle and prophecy still hold, though not in the sense of the old-fashioned literalists; that the Bible's authority dare not be denied; that Christianity is absolute; and that not reason but faith only can grapple with the problem of the mysteries of faith. The author shows a wide acquaintance with ancient and modern Continental and American literature; and while moving throughout in philosophical thought, his language is relatively easy to understand. Nevertheless, his work is hardly suited to theological beginners. For the student trained in apologetics and philosophy of religion the thesis that there is positive truth, comprehended by faith, and that theological negativism can have no place in religious thinking is most challenging, though the writer's compromising, halfway, and in itself liberal approach cannot satisfy believing Christians, whose faith is directly rooted in the divine Word and who accept the mysteries of Christianity as these are given in Scripture in simple, childlike faith. The conservative is

attracted to the book, nevertheless, by its proof that secular humanism, which denies revelation and faith, is neither reasonable nor in agreement with the evident religious facts which theology as an empirical science is able to demonstrate. It is no doubt this emphasis on positive truth that has won for the work many friends also among conservative theologians.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**THE SMALL SECTS IN AMERICA.** Revised Edition. By Elmer T. Clark. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, Nashville. 1949. 256 pages, 6×9. \$3.00.

The first edition appeared in 1937 and was reviewed in this journal, Vol. IX, p. 234. This is a revised and somewhat enlarged edition. The author discusses the small sects under the following headings: 1. The Pessimistic Group (millenarian); 2. The Perfectionist Sects; 3. The Charismatic Church of the Holy Roller Type; 4. The Communistic Societies; 5. The Legalistic Sects. Naturally such a division results in much overlapping. The author is not interested primarily in the theological background of the small, and sometimes bizarre, sects, but in an attempt to explain the rise of these sects from an economic and particularly from a psychological viewpoint. We can heartily recommend the book for the factual information which the author presents in an interesting manner.

F. E. MAYER

**THESE ALSO BELIEVE. A Study of Modern American Cults, Minority Religious Movements.** By Charles Samuel Braden, Ph. D. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1949. XV and 491 pages, 5½×8¼. \$6.00.

The author is professor of History and Literature of Religions at Northwestern University and has done extensive work in this field. To understand his "sympathetic" approach to religious groups which are evidently outside the pale of Christendom, it is essential to keep in mind that the author is a liberal theologian. His theological orientation is probably best exemplified in the fact that he is co-author of the 1936 edition of G. G. Atkins' *The Procession of the Gods*. (We are acquainted with the 1930 edition, in which Atkins traces the alleged growth of the idea of God according to the principles of the School of Comparative Religion, the rankest type of the evolutionary hypothesis. We assume that the 1936 edition, of which Braden is co-author, does not deviate basically from the first edition.) In the Preface of the book under review Professor Braden characterizes himself as "a graduate of liberal schools [who] remains an 'unrepentant liberal' to the present; [who] holds no brief for any particular cult nor is violently opposed to any; who believes that in general the cults represent the earnest attempt of millions of people to find the fulfillment of deep and legitimate needs of the human spirit, which most of them seem not to have found in the established churches." It is Braden's purpose to set forth the origin and the chief tenets of the

following groups: The Peace Mission Movement of Father Divine; Psychiana; New Thought; Unity School of Christianity; Christian Science; Theosophy; The I Am Movement; The Liberal Catholic Church; Spiritualism; Jehovah's Witnesses; Anglo-Israel; The Oxford Group Movement; Mormonism. In our opinion this book is the most reliable and most thorough study of these metaphysical cults and religious groups on the market. The book by Marcus Bach, *They Have Found a Faith*, is based entirely on personal interviews with the leaders of the various cults. Charles W. Ferguson, *The New Book of Revelations* (1929), now out of print, describes some thirty cults in a very interesting manner, though he frequently resorts to ridicule, a procedure which may be in place at times, but which never convinces. E. E. Clark's book, reviewed above, deals almost exclusively with such minority groups as are still listed as "Christian." G. G. Atkins' *Modern Cults and Religious Movements* was published almost twenty-five years ago. Braden's studies are based in part on personal interviews, but primarily on the official publications of the respective cults. He has succeeded admirably in presenting the chief religious tenets of each group. The author shows that a relatively large number of cults have accepted the basic principles of Unity. Unity is essentially the modern form of Satan's first temptation to Adam and Eve: "Ye shall be like God," especially as it was developed in Oriental philosophy, which views man as nothing less than a divine spark, a fragment of the Cosmic Soul, an image of God with divine potentialities. In an Appendix the reader will find a short description of a large number of groups, some of which, for example, Bahaiism, in the reviewer's opinion, merit a more thorough study.

F. E. MAYER

**THE EFFICIENT CHURCH WORKER.** By Eugene Dinsmore Dolloff. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York 175 pages,  $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . \$2.00.

Here we have a book teeming with practical suggestions to the various officeholders of a Christian congregation. While it is true that church polity varies in the Protestant Churches, church officers are similar and the suggestions offered here for the functioning of these officers can readily be adapted.

Some, among them this reviewer, dislike such titles as "The Ministry of Music" and "The Floral Ministry." The Church has one divinely ordained ministry, and that is the ministry of the Word. In the chapter on the Christian Education Officials one misses reference to the best agency in Christian education, the good Christian parochial school. Others besides Lutherans have or are establishing Christian day schools. Therefore any discussion of the educational program of a church today calls for inclusion of this type of school.

The author is pastor of the First Baptist Church, New Bedford, Mass., and has been a director of the Evangelistic Association of New England for more than twenty years.

L. J. SIECK

**A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF MISSIONS.** By Harold Lindsell, Ph. D. Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill. 238 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . \$2.50.

Dr. Lindsell is at present professor of Missions and Church History at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. He was ordained by the Southern Baptist Convention.

His book is refreshing reading. It is built up on Scriptural foundations. The author insists throughout that a Christian philosophy of missions must insist on men and women who themselves have a true saving faith in the Redeemer Jesus Christ as the only Mediator between God and man and who then preach this Christ to the non-Christian world. His views on the second advent of Jesus Christ are those of millennialists. His chapters on the Word of God, on the nature and function of the Church, on the individual, on sin, as well as other sections, rest solidly on the Holy Scriptures. "The Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation. But until that Gospel is mediated to men by men, it has no power and can produce no salvation."

E. C. ZIMMERMANN

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:*

**PORTALS OF PRAYER.** No. 95. COMPLETE IN HIM. Daily Devotions from January 1 to February 21, 1950. By Rev. Charles A. Behnke, D. D. 10 cents.

**ANDACHTSBUECHLEIN.** No. 95. IN GOTTES HAND. January 1 to February 21, 1950. By Rev. N. P. Uhlig. 10 cents.

**PORTALS OF PRAYER,** No. 96. "Christ for Us." Daily Devotions from February 22 to April 16, 1950. By Rev. Edwin L. Wilson. 10 cents each.

**ANDACHTSBUECHLEIN,** No. 96. "Jesus Christus, unsere Hoffnung." Andachten fuer die Zeit vom 22. Februar bis zum 16. April 1950. By Rev. Theo. L. Blanken, p. em. 10 cents each.

**THE LUTHERAN ANNUAL,** 1950. O. A. Dorn, editor, and Armin Schroeder, statistical editor. 276 pages,  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ . 50 cents.

**AMERIKANISCHER KALENDER,** 1950. Dr. J. T. Mueller, literary editor, and the Rev. Armin Schroeder, statistical editor. 276 pages,  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ . 50 cents.

**A CHILD'S GARDEN OF SONG.** Compiled and edited by Theodore G. Stelzer. 81 pages,  $8 \times 9$ . \$1.50 An excellent collection of 82 religious songs for children in the age of 6—8 years.

**CONCORDIA BIBLE TEACHER.** Vol. XI, January-March 1950, No. 2. \$1.00 per annum.—**CONCORDIA BIBLE STUDENT.** Vol. XXXIX, January-March 1950, No. 2. 65 cents per annum.—"Studies in the Book of Genesis." Part I. Edited by Rev. John M. Weidenschilling, S. T. D., under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

